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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Are you in favor of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's plan to redefine public service and "reduce" government?

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INSIDE



Navy Probe

The Navy said Sunday it will investigate "clearly inappropriate" videos broadcast to the crew of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

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Surgery for Zsa Zsa

Zsa Zsa Gabor was hospitalized Sunday to undergo surgery to have part of her right leg amputated.

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Fund seeks independent evaluators for fiduciary audit vs Merrill Lynch. **PAGE 3**

CNMI overspends by \$16M in FY'10

» Collects \$2M less revenue

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A day after submitting his written State of the Commonwealth report, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial also gave the Legislature a more detailed annual financial report showing that the CNMI government overspent more than \$16 million because of excess personnel costs at the Departments of Public Safety and Public Health, among other things, as well as actual revenue that's \$2 million lower than projected in Fiscal Year 2010.



Fitial

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'To move islands forward' Fitial and Inos to meet with lawmakers early this month

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos would like to meet with all lawmakers early this month to help move the CNMI forward amid the toughest economic challenge to hit the CNMI and bickering among elected leaders.

A "full leadership meeting" is part of the governor's written 2010 State of the Commonwealth report to the Legislature, which drew different reactions from lawmakers yesterday.

House minority leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) said the governor's proposed meeting is similar to his proposed budget summit that he has

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House Speaker wants subsistence allowance of lawmakers scrapped

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) said yesterday that he will propose to remove

lawmakers' monthly subsistence allowance of up to \$4,250, a few weeks after the Senate's decision to also allow Saipan senators to receive up to \$2,750 in monthly subsistence allowance.

"What the hell is wrong with these people?" Tenorio said, referring to the Senate's 9-0 amendment of its own rules on Dec. 9 amid shrinking government revenue and growing budget deficit.

Previously, only six Rota and Tinian senators received a monthly subsistence allowance of \$4,250.

Two House members from Rota and Tinian have a \$4,000 monthly subsistence allowance, but Rep. Trenton Conner (R-Tinian) reiterated yesterday that he is only requesting up to \$3,000 a month.

Tenorio said he will be introducing a resolution to amend the House of Representatives rules to restrict the monthly subsistence allowance of \$4,000 to the Tinian and Rota member.

The speaker said he will also introduce a House bill to restrict the monthly subsistence allowance of all lawmakers, to include senators.

Conner said in his opinion, the speaker's decision to stop the monthly subsistence allowance is to get back at him and Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota) for not voting in favor of the speaker's casino bill.

"Let's be fair... It's like tying our hands... We are made to suffer because of the defeat of his casino bill," Conner said, adding that lawmakers from Rota and Tinian, along with Saipan lawmakers, incur additional costs by traveling from their island to another for sessions.

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HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan), right, looks on while his colleagues confer during a break at the Senate session on Thursday on Capital Hill. House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) says he will propose to remove 11 of 29 lawmakers' monthly subsistence allowance of up to \$4,250, a few weeks after the Senate allowed Saipan senators to also receive up to \$2,750 in subsistence allowance as Torres proposed.



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Local

Inos line item vetoes \$40K in \$238K appropriation for Saipan precincts

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos line item vetoed yesterday \$40,608 in a local bill appropriating a total of \$238,726 in developers' infrastructure tax fund for Saipan precinct projects, saying that the same funding source had already been appropriated in July last year.

But Inos approved the rest of Rep. Rafael Demapan's (Cov-Saipan) House Local Bill 17-11, Draft 2.

The acting governor signed the measure into Saipan Local Law 17-6, the first local law to be signed this year.

Inos said Section 3(b) of the bill is vetoed "as it identified the

same funding source previously reappropriated under Saipan Local Law 17-4 (HLB 17-22, D1), which was approved on July 7, 2010.

That measure appropriated \$16,000 for the China Town basketball court renovation, \$10,000 for two bus shelters in Puerto Rico, and \$14,000 for the 2010 Liberation Day activities.

"As such, the available balance under Business Unit 3389 is only \$608, not \$40,608," Inos said in his transmittal message to Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) and House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan).

Demapan's local bill would

have reappropriated the \$40,608 to pave Fitme Place on Saipan.

Inos also told lawmakers that more specific appropriations are encouraged as opposed to general categories such as "various projects."

"Identifying specific projects assists the expenditure authorities in clearly channeling the funds to projects intended by the measure. It also allows the legislators to appropriate the correct amount needed for a project, so as to prevent future appropriations to complement any shortfall for said project. The language as phrased leaves much to be guessed," he acting governor said.

Demapan's original local bill was a subject of tedious delib-

eration during the Dec. 7 Saipan delegation session.

Saipan lawmakers deliberated for two hours on how to divide \$238,726 among five precincts for their pet projects, but ended up not giving a single cent to Precincts 4 and 5.

Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan) made a floor amendment that divided the full amount equally among the five Saipan precincts, or \$47,745.20 each. This amendment was adopted.

Demapan made a floor amendment to his own bill to give \$143,235.60 instead of \$47,745.20 to his Precinct 2. This took away the \$47,745.20 each to Precincts 4 and 5, and maintained the said amount for Precincts 1 and 3.



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

**Overseas Long Stay/
Domestic Dual Life Fair 2010**



As part of its continued marketing efforts to promote the Northern Marianas as a preferred destination for seniors, the **Marianas Visitors Authority** recently participated in the **Overseas Long Stay/Domestic Dual Life Fair 2010**. The consumer show, organized by the **Long Stay Foundation**, attracted 8,350 attendees and was held at **Tokyo Big Sight**.

The show featured 160 booths from 112 countries and regions, private companies, organizations and associations. The Northern Marianas booth was in a prime location and welcomed a significant number of visitors during the fair. The MVA also successfully negotiated with the organizers to conduct a destination presentation at the fair, free of charge. The 40-minute PowerPoint presentation entitled, "How to Enjoy Long Stays in the Marianas" introduced various activities targeting seniors, such as diving, walking and golf. A total of 60 seniors attended the seminar.

In November 2010, the Northern Marianas welcomed 1,161 visitors from Japan ages 60 and over, a little over 10 percent of all Japan arrivals that month, and 11 percent more than November 2009.



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Fund seeks independent evaluators for fiduciary audit vs Merrill Lynch

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund decided to seek a third-party evaluator to conduct the fiduciary audit of its former investment consultant, Merrill Lynch.

The fiduciary audit is being sought to once and for all determine if there's merit to follow the clamor of retirees, members of the Legislature, and the community to sue Merrill Lynch in court.

Board of trustees chair Sixto Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune* that the fiduciary audit was a recommendation by the Fund's legal counsel and has been in the works for months now.

However, due to some challenges, no evaluators were identified to date. He cited two factors in hiring third-party evaluators: affordability and expertise.

Igisomar said the Fund intends to tap the services of off-island evaluators. However, only one firm has responded to the request for proposal issued by the Fund. Another factor in the delay, the chairman added, is the cost-estimate for the project which may not be affordable to the Fund.

Merrill Lynch, along with

Arnel Hocog no longer is Arts Council director

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture no longer has an executive director after the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs did not renew the contract of Angel S. Hocog.

Hocog confirmed yesterday with *Saipan Tribune* about the non-renewal of his contract which expired on Dec. 31.

Hocog's last day at work was on Dec. 28.

According to Hocog, he received an email from DCCA secretary Melvin Faisao informing him about the non-renewal of his contract on Nov. 30, 2010. He received the official notice on Dec. 21.

Hocog took over the post left vacant by former Arts Council director Ramona T. Rebuénog, who ran as the Covenant Party's mayoralty candidate for the Northern Islands during the 2009 election.

A staff at the Arts Council said DCCA deputy secretary Rhonda F. Nogis currently serves as the council's acting executive director.

Faisao refused to disclose the grounds for the non-renewal of Hocog's contract.

the Fund trustees, was sued by three retirees in October 2009 for providing "bad advice" to the trustees, resulting in the collapse of its stock investments.

Retirees Mario Taitano, Roman Tudela, and Patricia Guerrero in their lawsuit said they have enough basis to prove that Merrill Lynch acted "very badly" on providing advice to the Fund.

Since then, the Fund trustees were encouraged by retirees to join them in the lawsuit against the former consultant, but it has so far refused.

"Based on our preliminary review, there was no basis to do it. But we're not comfortable in just looking at that preliminary review. That's why we follow the advice of our counsel to conduct fiduciary audit to know if Merrill Lynch really did its job for the Fund and did not cause injury to our investment," Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune*.

He admitted that the action was also a result of "external advice" received by the trustees against Merrill Lynch.

Members of the Commonwealth Retirees Association earlier urged that instead of siding with Merrill Lynch, the NMI Retirement Fund should run after its investment consultant and should join the case against the entity to make the retirees' lawsuit a strong case.

The chairman said the legal counsel is set to give an update on its status in next board meeting. Igisomar pointed out that no decision to sue the former investment consultant will

be made until the fiduciary audit is completed. He has yet to give a timeframe.

Prior to naming the Wilshire Consulting, the Fund has been doing business with Merrill Lynch which contract has no expiration date but allows the Fund to review it every two years.

The plaintiffs in the case filed against Merrill Lynch claimed the consultant overcharged the Fund and accused of it negligence for providing "bad advise" to the trustees resulting in investment losses estimated at over \$150 million since October 2008.

During 2009's money managers' meeting, Merrill Lynch representatives reported positive investment earnings in the 22 years of the program—from the initial \$18.5 million in March 1987 to a little over \$335 million as of December 2009.

Out of the 22-year period of the investment fund, its financial advisors also disclosed that there were only five years in which the Fund posted a loss in its investment earnings from 1987 which means that 16 out of the 22 years posted positive investment earnings.

Saipan Tribune learned that the Fund paid Merrill Lynch about \$150,000 per year for its service. The figure is equivalent to what has been signed in the contract which provides about 3 basis points—or 3.5 percent of every 1 percent—of the total Fund investments.

Merrill Lynch served the Fund since the program's inception in the 1980s.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the Statewide Independent Living Council will hold its FY 2011 First General Membership Meeting on Thursday, January 6, 2011 at the Chamolinian Room, Hyatt at 9:00am-2:00pm. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

- I. Roll Call
- II. Adoption of Agenda
- III. Adoption of 03/31/10 Minutes
- IV. Reports
 - Chair
 - OVR Director
 - CLI Director
- V. Old Business
 - Needs Assessment
 - 2011 IL State Plan
 - Membership Status
- VI. New Business
 - 2011 Resource Plan
 - Members Training
 - Consumers Internship
- VII. Miscellaneous
- VIII. Announcements
- IX. Adjournment

/s/ **Stephen Dutro**
SILC Chairperson

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call 322-6537(voice) or 322-6449(TTY). Please contact Elvira Seman (Council Liaison) two days in advanced for necessary arrangements.

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by the United States Department of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

Napolitano confirms release of worker rule in first quarter 2011

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano confirmed last week with Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan the release of the long-awaited transition worker visa classification rule in the first quarter of this year, or between January and March.

Napolitano's Dec. 28 letter is consistent with the Department of Homeland Security's semiannual regulatory agenda published in the Dec. 20 Federal Register stating that the worker rule will be issued in March 2011.

The worker rule is expected to cover some 22,000 foreign workers

in the CNMI.

"Currently, the final rule is in the final stages of Departmental clearance. DHS expects to publish the Transitional Worker Visa Classification Final Rule during the first quarter of Calendar Year 2011," Napolitano said in a two-page letter to Sablan.

Sablan said the release of the final rule should remove much of the uncertainty hanging over the business community and nonresident workers about the immigration transition.

For many in the CNMI, every single day that the regulations are not released to guide them means businesses can't expand or hire workers, and foreign workers can't decide whether

to stay or leave.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, in his written Dec. 30 State of the Commonwealth report, hopes that the delay in the release of the rule "reflects its (DHS) decision to revise the draft transitional worker regulations in light of comments filed.

DHS, in its semiannual regulatory agenda, had said that "each of the estimated 22,000 CNMI transitional workers will be required to pay a \$320 fee per year, for an annualized cost to the affected public of \$7 million."

This has caused concern among foreign workers who thought that the annual fee will be shouldered by employers and not employees, under the proposed rule in 2009.

DHS has yet to clarify the matter, since the original proposed rule and the statement in the semiannual regulatory agenda contain conflicting information.

Napolitano, in her letter, assured Sa-

blan that DHS is committed to continuing its efforts to work with the CNMI to bring about a smooth and effective transition to a federal immigration system.

"Finalizing the CNMI regulations has been a priority for DHS," she said.

DHS issued the final rule on the E-2 CNMI-only investor visa in December.

Napolitano's Dec. 28 letter is in response to a September inquiry from Sablan, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources chair Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources Rep. Nick J. Rahall II (D-WV), Sen. Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), and the original sponsor of the CNMI immigration pro-

visions in Public Law 110-229.

The September letter stressed the urgency of issuing the regulations to implement P.L. 110-229, or the law that placed CNMI immigration under federal control.

The regulations were required by this law to be in place at the start of the transition period on Nov. 28, 2009.

Sablan said a lawsuit that Fitial filed in 2009 prevented the interim rule from taking effect without additional time for and consideration of public comments.

"However, the extended comment period ended a year ago in January 2010," Sablan said.

FITIAL

From Page 1

been pushing almost a year ago but was rejected by the House leadership.

Benavente said had the House leadership approved his proposal to hold a budget summit, it could have prevented delayed payrolls and a government shutdown.

The former speaker and lieutenant governor said the CNMI came close to not paying even so-called critical government employees.

He said the Fitial administration should now really consider closing or downsizing certain government agencies whose functions are not critical.

"I am also glad that the administration now recognizes the need to downsize this government... If we come together and not only consider the pursuit of economic recovery and prosperity but most importantly to come together as leaders and reprioritize public service based on what we can pay for and what we can afford, then it will be a big step," he said.

Rep. Trenton Conner (R-Tinian) hopes that the meeting will be an opportunity for the governor to share his "master plan" for the CNMI, so that lawmakers can also pitch in on how to improve the economy and the welfare of the people.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) said he would have liked to hear more about the governor's proposal to move the economy forward, but he said he is open to a full leadership meeting with the administration.

He also said that the meeting should also allow lawmakers to ask questions from the governor and share their ideas and proposals.

Rep. Trenton Conner (R-Tinian) said it would be better if the proposed meeting will be to address not only the economy but also the internal differences among elected officials.

"I hope it's not only about the proposal to push for casino on Saipan. I hope they place it on the ballot to ask people again if they want casinos on Saipan instead of shoving the proposal to people's throat," he said.

Conner said it's unfortunate that 2010 didn't see a "united" Legislature, among other things.

"We could have done more if the leaderships worked together in 2010," he said.

The governor said his administration will be contacting lawmakers' offices in the coming days "to arrange for a meeting at a time that will be conve-

nient for everyone."

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that there's been no scheduled date yet for the meeting.

Written report

The governor's State of the Commonwealth report has drawn mixed reactions from a few lawmakers who were able to read it as of yesterday afternoon. Other members said they just got a copy of the report and have yet to read it.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) said the governor gave lots of rhetoric, and that the state of the economy has been blamed on external factors and the federal government, but did not really point to the current leadership.

Palacios said it would have been better if the governor delivered a State of the Commonwealth Address and not just submitted a written report to the Legislature.

"What does that tell us lawmakers? That the governor, who has been delivering his State of the Commonwealth Address since 2006, just gave us a written report? I think it will be more respectful to the Legislature if the governor also meets with them when he delivers his report," he said.

He said while the governor did a good job in capping the state of CNMI's affairs in 2010, it fell short on proposals to solve the financial crisis.

"What I like to hear more are his plans to move us forward, what investors is he trying to invite, for example? What does he want lawmakers do to help him make the life of people better?" he said.

Just like other lawmakers, Palacios hopes that in 2011, employees will no longer be subjected to a 16-hour cut, but only to fewer work hour reductions.

Palacios also called on the Fitial administration to implement recommendations by Management Analysis Inc. in its desk audit on the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs to reduce the government.

Fitial, who is expected to be back on island today after attending yesterday's inauguration of Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo and Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, said in his report that the meeting is part of an "effort to foster a concerted approach to collectively move our islands forward."

"As elected leaders of the Commonwealth, we have a common duty to serve our people and establish a collaborative approach to enhancing the quality of life for all. Too many times, our goals and desires to right the wrongs

have been blinded by special interests and unnecessary political bickering," he said.

Besides saying that "the state of the Commonwealth is in severe disarray," the governor also said that to continue to govern like it is business as usual will ultimately translate into a tremendous injustice to the people.

"As we begin calendar year 2011, I believe we owe it to our people and ourselves as elected leaders, to alter the mindset and redefine what public service is all about. It is high time for all of us to come together in pursuit of economic recovery and prosperity for all," he said.

Benavente said "it's been high time for a long time."

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) said he appreciates the governor submitting his report but he prefers having a joint session to receive the governor's State of the Commonwealth Address which he has been doing since 2006.

"But we can live with this. The report itself is the grim reality of the state of our economy. We must work with Congressman (Gregorio Kilili) Sablan to see if he can drum up support in Congress for direct appropriation to the CNMI," said Hofschneider, who was also on Guam yesterday along with three other CNMI senators for the gubernatorial inauguration.

Hofschneider echoed the governor's statement that the CNMI's unstable economic state resulted from policies implemented related to federalization and external factors.

He said the CNMI needs to speed up the use of capital improvement project funding.

"And finally, as a senator from Tinian, I appeal to the administration for more support in our efforts to have direct flights into Tinian to boost our tourism and support and promote the casino industry on Tinian. I believe that if the industry thrives and flourishes, all of us in the CNMI will benefit," he said.

House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), for his part, said his problem is not with the Fitial administration but with the Senate.

Tenorio, Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) and Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), among other lawmakers, separately said they have yet to read the governor's report.

Tenorio reiterated that he would rather hear the governor deliver his State of the Commonwealth Address before he submits his Fiscal Year 2012 budget submission to the Legislature.

HOUSE

From Page 1

sions, public hearings and other official functions.

The speaker said if his resolution and bill don't succeed, he will ask the Office of the Public Auditor and the Office of the Attorney General to "do something about it."

"It is not right for them to continue receiving subsistence allowance," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Tenorio said if OPA and OAG are unable to stop the monthly subsistence allowance to 11 of 29 lawmakers, then he said each of 29 lawmakers might as well avail of up to \$5,000 monthly subsistence allowance.

He said it is not fair that only select lawmakers get monthly subsistence allowance on top of their monthly salary, discretionary funding, and share in the leadership account if they chair committees or are officers.

Capital Hill officials and employees interviewed said this is the worst time for senators to allow themselves to re-

ceive up to \$2,750 in monthly subsistence allowance, and it shows the lack of sensitivity of senators with the worst financial crisis that the CNMI is experiencing.

The three senators covered by the rule change are Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan), Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), and Senate floor leader Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan).

Torres, who initiated the amendment to Senate Rule 12, said the amendment doesn't necessarily mean that he and the two other senators will get their subsistence allowance.

In nine years from 2001 to 2010, senators' monthly subsistence allowance totaled over \$3.2 million, OPA said in a March 2010 response letter to the speaker.

OPA said that while the authority for the monthly subsistence allowance is found in Senate rules and resolutions, the Constitution and Commonwealth law require allowances for expenses to be in the form of law, and that the CNMI is likely paying senators in excess of reasonable travel costs.

CNMI

From Page 1

The overspending and lower revenue resulted in a deficit of \$18.586 million in FY 2010, which he mentioned in passing in his Dec. 30 State of the Commonwealth report.

"This condition was attributed to \$2,318,800 less in revenue collections than estimated and \$16,267,504 in excess expenditures over appropriations contained in P.L. 16-32," Fitial said in his Dec. 31 financial report to Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) and House Speaker Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan).

Fitial blames excess personnel costs to a lack of austerity measures during FY 2010.

"If the 16 hours per pay period of austerity measures included in the administration's budget submission had been implemented, the estimated \$15.856 million in savings would have essentially balanced the budget despite the hospital, medical referral and utility overexpenditures," he said.

Revenue collections and other financing sources in FY 2010 totaled \$145.221 million, which was \$1.224 million less than projected.

This was exclusive of those reserved for debt service and other transfers.

A significant decline was experienced in income taxes collections at \$4.741 million less than estimate.

"This resulted in total tax collections falling \$4.877 million short of the estimate," said the governor, who is expected to be back on island today after attending yesterday's inauguration of

Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo.

The governor said license and fees, charges for services, and other revenue collections exceeded the estimate by a combined \$3.653 million.

This is mainly due to hospital and collections exceeding the estimate by \$4.257 million offset by shortfalls in interest collected and lottery revenue.

Other financing sources and uses totaled \$1.094 million under the estimate due to unbudgeted court ordered transfers and hotel and alcohol container taxes to the NMI Retirement Fund.

Fitial said these unaudited amounts have been provided to auditors who are currently working on the financial activity for FY 2010 which closed on Sept. 30, 2010.

Fitial said overall, the excess spending were because of personnel costs of \$6.6 million, excess expenditures of \$7.2 million in operations, and utilities costs of a little over \$2.5 million.

The excess personnel costs were primarily attributable to the hospital, \$4.2 million, and DPS, \$3.4 million.

The governor also said the \$9.7 million in excess expenditures under the operations category was primarily attributed to hospital operations (6.3 million), medical referral costs (\$4 million), and increased local CNMI share of Medicaid spending (\$3.1 million).

The unfunded and unremitted portion of the employer contributions to the NMI Retirement Fund calculated at some \$7.85 million has not been accrued and therefore, does not affect the expenditure amounts reported, he added.

Lawmakers received the financial report only yesterday afternoon and could not comment on it yet.

Flores asks DPW architect to make kennel design for shelter program

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
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REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores is planning to work with the Department of Public Works for the architectural design of the kennels for the stray animal shelter program.

"I've already met with architect Crystal Mina of DPW for help in the kennel design," Flores said.

During his initial meeting with DPW, Flores said the agency expressed willingness to provide assistance to their office to help make the shelter a reality.



Flores

The mayor said Mina already started working on the design which will be made available within the month.

According to Flores, the stray animal shelter program does not have a budget to hire an architect from the private sector to do the kennel design.

He said the services of a private architect will cost the program thousands of dollars.

However, Flores is not sure how much Mina's services will cost. "It is possibly free or it won't cost too much," he added.

Once the kennel design is finalized, Flores said they can

start the kennel construction and the shelter program subsequently.

He said the Northern Marianas Trades Institute will provide manpower in building the shelter. Students of NMTI already helped in cleaning the shelter site in Lower Base.

Flores expressed his appreciation to Mina and DPW secretary Martin Sablan for their assistance in making the stray animal shelter program a reality.



CLARISSA DAVID

BEAD-MAKING

Students occupy themselves with bead-making Wednesday morning as part of the free sports and art programs sponsored by the Division of Youth Services in collaboration with the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture.

Man spends the New Year in prison after beating girlfriend

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Superior Court Judge Kenneth Govendo found yesterday that there is probable cause for Ramon S. Kaipat to be charged with disturbing the peace and assault and battery charges.

Kaipat was arrested after his girlfriend Rosa Rios sought the police's help on the night of Dec. 31, New Year's Eve.

Court documents stated that it was about 2:26am on Dec. 31 when police received a disturbance call and after confirming the incident, police apprehended Kaipat and detained him at the Department of Corrections.

Documents revealed that Kaipat and Rios were about to leave the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion in Susupe on the eve of Dec. 31 when the woman's former boy-

friend stopped by and greeted Rios. When they left the beach park, Kaipat started an argument with Rios about her former boyfriend and began hitting her when they arrived home.

Rios, based on the court documents, tried to block Kaipat from punching her but was hit twice in the head. Rios managed to get up from the couch and was about to run out the door when Kaipat blocked her again, held her by the chin and was trying to choke her. The woman managed to push Kaipat away and she ran to her sister's house next door where she called the police.

Yesterday, the judge ruled that there's probable cause for the two charges and set a \$2,000 bail for Kaipat's temporary release from police custody. He is set for arraignment on Jan. 18.

Woman gets 6-month jail term for reckless driving

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The woman who was slapped with four different charges last week filed a guilty plea for reckless driving and was sentenced to six months in prison at the Department of Corrections.

Norlina Jean Taitano was charged with attempted first degree murder, assault with a dangerous weapon, hit and run, and disturbing peace on Dec. 15.

Court documents showed that pursuant to plea negotiations between the Commonwealth and the counsel for the defendants, Taitano desires to resolve the offenses charged by a non-trial disposition.

Due to the plea agreement on reckless driving offense, the Commonwealth agrees to dismiss all other charges with prejudice.

Taitano was sentenced to im-

prisonment for six months, all suspended except for the first 30 days, with credit for 20 days already served.

Taitano, as condition of the plea agreement, shall report to the corrections department to begin serving the remainder of her unsuspended sentence.

She will also pay all court costs and probation fees and will pay restitution to the Commonwealth Health Center in the amount of \$806.59 for her victim's medical costs.

Records showed that on April 9, 2010 Taitano operated a motor vehicle with willful or wanton disregard for the safety of others. She caused body injuries to Nelsin A. Saimon, a household member of the defendant.

Superior Court associate judge Ramona V. Manglona ordered her court appearance for a review hearing on Feb. 16 at 1:30pm.

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Life in Motion

UMDA: Ex-CFO's complaint baseless, wants lawsuit dismissed

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

United Micronesia Development Association filed last Friday a motion to dismiss the complaint of its former chief financial officer Hiroyuki Saito, who sued the company for breach of contract.

In its motion, UMDA asserts that Saito's employment contract expired on March 29, 2009 without any written renewal and without any approval by the UMDA board as was required.

UMDA is represented in the case by Robert T. Torres and O'Connor Berman Dotts & Banes.

The lawyers said that in the absence of a written document confirming Saito's renewal, the complaint of breach of contract is without merit and baseless. At the same time, they said UMDA has made it clear in its motion to unseal the complaint by Saito that in addition to defending the matter, the company will vigorously pursue claims against Saito for serious breaches of fiduciary duty as its chief financial officer.

The district court unsealed the case and UMDA will pursue the matter with full transparency and

litigate the case, including Saito's claims, for public scrutiny.

UMDA denies that it breached any agreement with Saito, whose two-year contract started on March 30, 2007.

The company's chief executive officer David Wickline in a statement said that UMDA looks forward to responding and maintains that the facts and the law are on the side of UMDA.

"As a regional company, UMDA continues to maintain its efforts to improve our region economically and to keep the best qualified personnel who are committed to that vision. Unfortunately, Saito was no longer within that vision and his departure was necessary and justified. UMDA looks forward to presentation of its position at the appropriate time, in court and in the public forum, without reservation," stated Wickline.

On Dec. 22, designated UMDA CFO, Rufo T. Mafnas, filed a declaration in court after reviewing the company's corporate records and files.

"In my review of the UMDA minutes for board of directors and shareholders' meeting for the calendar years 2008 and 2009, there are no discussions nor actions by the board or share-

holders as to the renewal or continued employment of Hiroyuki Saito. I have also made inquiries of other UMDA managerial personnel regarding the existence of such a document, and everyone I have asked has denied any knowledge of its existence. To the best of my knowledge, there-

fore, no such document exists or has ever existed," stated Mafnas in his declaration.

Hearing for the motion to dismiss the complaint filed by UMDA is set for Feb. 10, 2011 under visiting judge Marilyn L. Huff.

UMDA was founded in 1966

in Saipan and has been involved in a wide range of businesses, including airlines, cable systems, shipping, and resort properties. UMDA's shareholders include the government or governmental entities of the CNMI, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and thousands of individual Mi-

cronesians and their families.

In December 2007 UMDA announced the purchase from JAL Group of a 313-room luxury hotel in Saipan, now called Palms Resort Saipan. In August the hotel announced its closure for renovation and will re-open within 20 months.



EAGLE MERRY-GO-ROUND

Four-year-old Mariano Vicente Aldan rides on the eagle merry-go-round at a mini-carnival at the Garapan Fishing Base last week. The carnival, owned by Olimp (USA) Inc., began operating on Christmas Day and is open to the public beginning at 5pm for at least the next six months.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Cancer group seeks grant for outreach program

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Cancer Association has applied for a grant that would help fund the design and development of effective and culturally appropriate outreach materials.

Program manager Tina Sablan said their group submitted last Dec. 30 an application for the TakeCare Foundation grant

which amounts to \$5,000.

TakeCare Foundation aims to enhance the health, wellness, and welfare of communities to which it belongs by donating to charitable and educational causes through contributions from the management and employees.

Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that the grant will be used to develop materials such as resource guides, models, fact

sheets, and brochures to promote breast and cervical cancer prevention and screening in the Commonwealth.

According to Sablan, breast and cervical cancers are the two most common cancers affecting women in the CNMI and among the top five causes of cancer death.

"This year we aim to ramp up our efforts to disseminate information throughout the community about breast and cervical cancer risk reduction and early detection, and encourage women to talk to their health providers about getting screened," she said.

Sablan said the materials to be developed through the grant

will be used by CCA, their volunteers and partners in conducting breast and cervical cancer outreach activities.

"If awarded, these funds would augment other resources that we have been able to secure thus far to develop and implement a breast and cervical cancer outreach volunteer program," she said.

Other funding received by CCA includes the \$18,000 grant awarded in October by the Pacific Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities in Honolulu.

According to Sablan, TakeCare will notify them of the application status by late June based on their grant guidelines.

Faisao expects increase in NAP applications

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A total of 9,590 individuals became qualified recipients of the Nutrition Assistance Program under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs as of Nov. 25, 2010.

Also known as the Food Stamp Program, NAP was created to promote the general welfare of CNMI residents and maintain their well being by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income, zero-income, and needy families and individuals.

Of this figure, about 66 percent or 6,356 of the recipients are Chamorro, Carolinian, and Americans while 34 percent or 3,234 of the beneficiaries are U.S.

citizen children of alien workers.

DCCA secretary Melvin Faisao said that as of Nov. 25, 2010, there are 520 pending food stamp applications that are still being processed.

Faisao told *Saipan Tribune* that the agency anticipates an increase of about 15 percent in the number of qualified recipients for the NAP due to the work hour reduction for fiscal year 2011 for executive branch employees of the government.

Faisao said the data they have is based on the current median household income in the CNMI as of last year, which is at \$24,101.

According to Faisao, figures as of Dec. 25, 2010 are still being tallied and finalized and will be made available soon.



**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP11-DPW-023

Submission: January 27, 2011 Time: 2:00 P.M.

"A&E CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR ARRA ENERGY PROJECTS"

The complete scope of work will be available on **December 28, 2010** at the Office of the CNMI ARRA State Lead, Third (3rd) Floor, Marianas Business Plaza #315, Susupe, Saipan.

A **Mandatory Pre-proposal Conference** is scheduled for **9:00 A.M., local time** at the Department of Public Works, Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Gualo Rai Commercial Building on **January 13, 2011**.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via e-mail to alfreda.camacho@recovery.gov.mp or faxed to (670) 234-3016 no later than **4:30P.M., local time, January 18, 2011**.

Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. Public law 15-95 local preference act, as further amended by Public Law 15-118, does not apply to this federally funded project.

This project is funded by the American Recovery and Re-investment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

/s/ MICHAEL J. ADA CNMI ARRA State Lead	/s/ MARTIN C. SABLAN Secretary of Public Works	/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN Director, Procurement & Supply
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BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION **AMENDED NOTICE OF SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING**

AMENDED NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission will conduct a special business meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday January 7, 2011 at the offices of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Family Building, Garapan Street, Garapan to consider an emergency petition, which was filed by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation on December 30, 2010 for an immediate increase in its current LEAC rate.

Under the LEAC tariff, which was established by Commission order on December 19, 2008, the Commission conducts a semi-annual review of the projected fuel expenses, which CUC will incur in order to operate its generating plants. Based on these reviews, the Commission establishes a LEAC charge for the following six month period, which is intended to recover these projected expenses. The LEAC tariff provides that in the event projected fuel expenses should exceed those funded under a current LEAC rate by \$350,000, CUC may petition for interim rate relief. In its current petition, CUC asserts that due to an unforeseen increase in fuel prices, the current LEAC rate of \$0.24446 per kWh will underfund fuel expenses in the current period [October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011] by over one million dollars. Accordingly, CUC requests that the current rate be increased immediately to \$0.26688 per kWh. CUC recognizes in its petition that any such partial and immediate relief would be subject to later true-up and, as appropriate, refund. On January 5, 2011, the Commission's independent regulatory consultant [Georgetown] will file its report on the CUC emergency petition. The CUC petition and the Georgetown report will be posted on the Chamber's website for public access. These documents will also be available for public review at the Chamber's office.

Public attendance and participation [including comments and questions] at this special Commission business meeting are welcome. Reports and other documents relevant to this single item agenda will also be available at the meeting for public inspection. Questions regarding the one item agenda should be referred to Commissioner Kyle Calabrese at 670-233-7150.

VEHICLES FOR BID

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**2001
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Frank Ermitanio
or John Blas at 235-6044.

Joeten-Kiyu to start anniversary preps early

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

This year is a big year for the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library as it turns 20 on Dec. 21, 2011.

Executive director John Oliver Gonzales said there will be a lot of activities in store for library patrons and the rest of the community for the 20th anniversary of the CNMI's state library.

Gonzales told *Saipan Tribune* that the library staff, the CNMI Library Council, and the Library Friends will collaborate and begin their anniversary preparations early "to make it the biggest celebration the CNMI has ever seen."

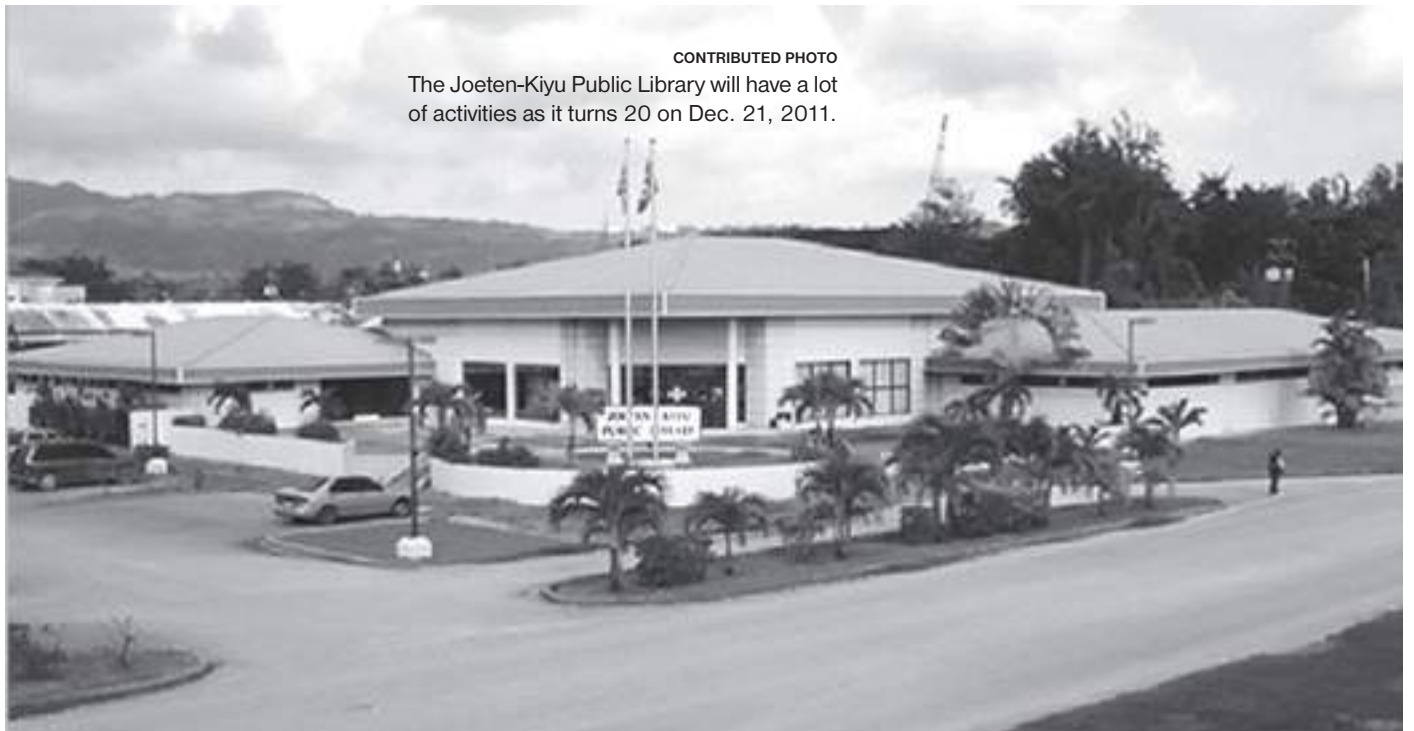
According to Gonzales, the library also plans to coordinate with the two major bene-

factors of the CNMI's state library, the Tenorio and Kiyu families, to create an anniversary task force assigned to come up with the program for the celebration.

Gonzales said they plan to involve schools and various private organizations that have shown support for library and its activities such as the Rotary Club of Saipan.

He also said they plan to hold exciting activities like poetry jams, forensic league competitions, a block party, as well as raffle draws to celebrate the milestone with all members of the community.

"Our library transcends nationalities. It is open to everyone. So we encourage the public to come join us in this big celebration," Gonzales added.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will have a lot of activities as it turns 20 on Dec. 21, 2011.

NMC hosts free info session on Jan. 5

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free information session on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011, in Room D1 at the college's As Terlaje cam-

pus, from 5:30pm to 6:30pm.

Faculty, staff, and students from the different degree and certificate programs at NMC, as well as Student Services rep-

resentatives from counseling, financial aid, and admissions will be on hand to answer questions. Other current students will also be speaking about

their experiences at NMC.

Individuals who attend the free information session will qualify to have their application fee and their placement test fees waived for the Spring 2011 semester. This corresponds to a

savings of about \$75. Registration for the Spring 2011 semester will begin on Monday, Jan. 10, 2011 and will continue until Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011.

This free information session is open to everyone, includ-

ing graduating seniors and their parents, government and private sector employees, international students, and members of the general public who are interested in learning more about the programs at NMC. **(PR)**

WIA trainees help shape workforce



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

WIA Hyatt Regency Saipan trainees, from the left, Brenda Lucido as operator/front desk clerk, Cimar Selepeo as reservation guest services officer, and Rosalinda Quitugua, Jovita Fitipol, and Magdalena Cepeda as cook helpers.

The CNMI's Workforce Investment Agency in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Saipan is currently subsidizing four of its trainees under its work experience program (WIA intensive

services) while one is under WIA's contractual OJT agreement with Hyatt reimbursing 50 percent of the employer's wages expenses.

WIA's three cook helpers were pre-

viously trained at Palms Resort and are appreciative of Hyatt Human Resources director Josephine Mesta for her willingness to be a partner to provide the trainees the opportunity to continue

on with their culinary career.

The cook trainees also completed their WIA subsidized classroom instructions at the Northern Marianas Trades Institute, an approved WIA

training provider for trades related occupations. WIA looks forward to seeing its participants achieve self sufficiency by entering into unsubsidized employment. **(PR)**

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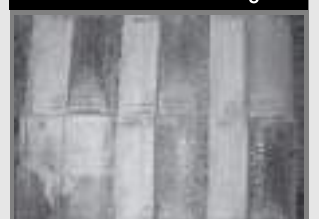
Electrical, Plumbing, Hardware Items



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Located in Chalan Piao Across from Tapo Shopping.

2 dead after outrigger canoes capsize in Guam

GUAM—Two mariners are dead and three rescued after two outrigger canoes capsized in rough seas in Tumon Bay yesterday.

Watchstanders in Coast Guard Sector Guam were notified at approximately 5:10pm Sunday by E911 dispatch that six mariners in an outrigger canoe overturned in rough seas and were missing.

The Coast Guard Cutter *Assateague*, a 110-foot patrol boat homeported in Apra Harbor, was diverted from a towing operation to assist with the search. A Navy aircrew from Helicopter Sea Combat Squad 25 also launched at 6pm to assist.

Two of the canoeists reached shallow

waters and were not in need of rescue.

The two remaining canoeists were stranded within a reef-line. A 31-year-old Good Samaritan in another canoe attempted a rescue, but was also overturned and became stranded with the others on the reef-line. Members of Guam Fire Department and Guam Police Department, piloting personal watercraft, immediately rescued all three.

The aircrew located one of the remaining canoeists at approximately 6:10pm. That individual was recovered by Guam Fire Rescue and pronounced dead. Due to unfavorable search conditions, the aircrew returned to base at midnight. As-

sateague crewmembers continued searching throughout the night.

The fire department launched a water asset at 6am and another at 8am to continue the search. The aircrew launched again at approximately 9am. Fire department search teams recovered the last canoeists' body outside the reef-line at approximately 11am.

The Coast Guard advises all mariners to check local weather conditions before heading out and to wear life jackets. Life jackets greatly increase the chance of survival during maritime accidents which can occur suddenly and without warning. (USCG)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Veterans Outreach set for Jan. 10-13

Department of Veterans Affairs legal administrative specialist for Guam and the CNMI, Tina San Augustine, will visit Saipan and Tinian for Veterans Outreach on Veterans Federal Benefits.

San Augustine will be available to answer questions and assist with claims. The date, time, and place of her visit are as follows:

■ Saipan: Jan. 12-13 0830 to 1630 at the Office of Military/Veterans Affairs on Capital Hill/Building 1363.

■ Tinian: Jan. 12-13 0830 to 1630 at the Tinian Municipal Council's Office.

If you wish to make an appointment or for further information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office of Military/Veterans Affairs at 664-2650. (PR)

OES PTSA meeting on Jan. 11

The Oleai Elementary School PTSA will have a meeting on Jan. 11 beginning at 6pm at the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend the meeting. (PR)

NMC spring 2011 registration schedule

The Northern Marianas College announced yesterday that registration for the upcoming spring 2011 semester will be ongoing from Jan. 10 to Jan. 15, 2011. Students can register on the day designated for their PowerCampus ID number. New students can begin registering on Jan. 12, 2011.

■ Jan. 10: Registration for students with PC No. 000000100 through 000010350

■ Jan. 11: Registration for students with PC No. 000010351 through 000013150

■ Jan. 12: Registration for students with PC No. 000013151 through 000014950

■ Jan. 13: Registration for all new, ongoing, and readmitted students

■ Jan. 14: Registration for all new, ongoing, and readmitted students

■ Jan. 15: Late registration

Students may register between 9am and 6pm, Monday through Friday, and between 9am and 12pm on Saturday.

For more information or inquiries, visit the NMC Office of Admissions and Records or call 234-5498 ext. 1528/1537. (NMC)

Art of Marriage Conference

Is your marriage on the rocks or do you have a great marriage? Either way, you are invited to attend The Art of Marriage Conference at Saipan Community Church on Feb. 11-12. The cost is \$35 per couple for the materials. Pre-married couples may also attend. There is only room for 25 couples. If you would like to reserve your space a \$20 deposit is required or you can pay the full amount. Contact Jill at 483-7245 or e-mail only1jillc@yahoo.com. For more information you can visit www.familylife.com/theartofmarriage. (PR)

PH Consulate to offer Saturday, Sunday services in 2011

The Philippine Consulate General on Saipan plans to continue its One-Sunday-A-Month Consular services, with an additional plan of alternating Saturday services for 2011.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig said this is due to the number of Filipinos in the CNMI who have availed of these weekend consular services.

The Philippine Consulate General will have the following weekend schedule for the first six months of 2011:

- January 30, Sunday
- February 26, Saturday
- March 20, Sunday
- April 16, Saturday
- May 22, Sunday
- June 25, Saturday

The office will be open to provide consular services and it will observe its usual office hours from 9am to 4pm without lunch breaks.

For inquiries on any consular service, contact the Philippine Consulate General at 234-1850, fax 234-1849 or email saipanpcg@pticom.com. (PR)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 4, 1999

Court orders gov't to explain refusal to represent Lang

The Superior Court yesterday summoned the CNMI government, the Attorney General's Office and acting AG Maya B. Kara to respond to a complaint filed by former Gov. Froilan C. Tenorio over their refusal to pay for his appeal against a \$12.4 million award in favor of a taxpayers' lawsuit. Mr. Tenorio claimed in the complaint that the government must shoulder the costs, expenses and attorney's fees incurred from his legal defense against the suit lodged more than five years ago by lawyer Jean Rayphand on behalf of CNMI taxpayers. In an injunction filed by his lawyer, Timothy H. Skinner, the ex-governor asked the court to require and permanently mandate the government to pay all legal expenses arising from the case since AGO has abandoned its representation of Mr. Tenorio.

Tenorio says immigration, labor policies haven't changed

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday said his administration will work to maintain control over minimum wage and immigration, easing fears that he has made a pact with Washington for a federal takeover. President Bill Clinton recently wrote to the governor congratulating him for agreeing to his plans to apply US laws on immigration and minimum wage to the Northern Marianas. The US leader also said in a letter that Washington is "willing to consider further measures for a transition to federal law in light of the economic situation the islands face." The letter, dated December 7, was sent after the two met briefly in neighboring Guam in late November. Tenorio said he did not want to comment on Clinton's letter until he meets with Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, head of the CNMI 902 panel.

Jan. 4, 2001

DPH drafts plan on use of tobacco settlement funds

Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez has asked the House Ways and Means Committee to consider the strategic plan drafted by the department in appropriating funds received by the CNMI government in connection with the tobacco industry settlement. Mr. Villagomez made the recommendations in response to a proposed measure which will establish a Master Settlement Agreement Trust Fund for the initial deposit of all funds from the tobacco settlement. Introduced by Rep. Malua T. Peter, HB 12-290 will ensure the preservation of funds until the CNMI Legislature has determined the appropriate allocation of funds. The bill requires the Finance Secretary to establish a separate CNMI Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund for deposit of all funds, past and future, received by the CNMI.

Proposed Tinian conservation areas get DLNR nod

A local bill seeking to establish a wildlife conservation area envisioned to cover the stretch of Tinian's Suicide Cliff region to the Rion Point area has drawn support from the Department of Lands and Natural Resources. According to DLNR Secretary Joaquin A. Tenorio, the measure would provide a habitat for a number of species indigenous and endemic to the Northern Mariana Islands. The DLNR chief added the proposed conservation site would benefit the people of the CNMI through the preservation of native species of plants and animals, and the also by providing an impetus for ecology-related tourism on the island of Tinian. "We are committed to assist Tinian in developing a management plan for the conservation area once it is designated, and to continue to provide biological support," said Mr. Tenorio.

Jan. 4, 2002

Naval security zone violators warned

The United States Coast Guard has warned that violators of the naval protection zone, which was implemented as a response to the September 11 terror attacks on the US, will be meted out with harsh penalties that include vessel confiscation, six-year imprisonment and a \$250,000-fine. The Coast Guard also reminded all cruise ships to execute the highest level of security through compliance with the 96-hour arrival notification. The Coast Guard's warning was sent to more than 300 seaports across the United States. The USCG stressed that all flagged vessels and commercial sealiners should observe the 100-yard security zone while the Naval Protection Zone is in effect.

PS warns vs. unsupervised dogs

A police officer shot dead a locally bred dog that reportedly poised to attack him and a two-year-old child in Navy Hill. Frank Pangelinan, a law enforcement officer, was conducting a routine check in the village when he observed a female child crossing the street without adult supervision. Just as he was about to approach the toddler, Pangelinan saw a dog charging aggressively toward their direction. The officer tried to shoo the dog away but to no avail, Department of Public Safety spokesperson Cecilia Celes reported. In fear for their safety, Pangelinan was left with no choice but to shoot the 12-year-old animal with his DPS-issued firearm.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Happy Birthday Ray K. Agun! Wishing you all the greatest gifts life could offer, you deserve only the best! Greetings coming from your family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy 22nd birthday Jen-nae Palacios Borja. May God bless you on this special day, Jan. 4, and many more blessings to come. Greetings from your two kiddos, Jaydon and Yeshua.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy birthday Terry L. Kisa. Enjoy your special day and may you have many more birthdays to come. You are looking younger each year that passes! Lots of love from your family and friends.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy Birthday to my big brother, Wes Tomokane, left. Sending you lots of love from Bamberg, Germany. I love and miss you so much! Greetings from your sister, Esah Tomokane.



Greetings to our lovely mother, Jenny U. Palacios. Happy New Year and many blessings for 2011 from your children. We are always thinking of you and we love you so much!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacific

Samoa warned about possibility of anti-Asian riots

» Outgoing Chamber President concerned with foreign investors

APIA, Samoa (Samoa Observer)—Samoa has been warned.

The riots in Solomon Islands and Tonga that destroyed more

than 90 percent of Chinese owned businesses could happen here.

The warning comes from

the outgoing President of the Chamber of Commerce, Lemalu Sina Lima as businesses gear for a tough 2011.

Ousted PNG deputy PM could cause problems

» Polye reportedly refused to assume ministerial post

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (PNG Post-Courier)—The National Alliance Party's Highlands bloc is expected to cause an upset within the government rank-and-file if actions of sacked Deputy Prime Minister Don Polye and his supporters are any indication.

Mr Polye has refused to take up his new portfolio – Foreign Affairs and Immigration – since he was dumped as Deputy PM and Minister for Works, Transport and Civil Aviation three weeks ago. This is not a good sign for the government with the Opposition pressing on with its motion for a no-confidence vote in the government.

In what then Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare thought was a smart move, he replaced Mr Polye with fellow Engan Mr Sam Abal as Deputy Prime Minister and this has caused a ground-swell of opposition in Enga Province and NA's 12 highlands bloc MPs who have signed a regional party resolution to support Mr Polye as their deputy NA leader (Highlands).

Last week Mr Abal attempted to bring the highlands bloc together and have him elected as deputy party leader instead of Mr Polye amounted to a confi-

dence gathering for Mr Polye and Mr Abal is on his own. Insiders also told this newspaper that Mr Polye was not happy with the Foreign ministry and was adamant that he be given his previous portfolio of Works, Transport and Civil Aviation. In the meantime the NA Highlands Bloc's Secretary General Mr Nathan Piari fired a stinging attack on Enga Governor Peter Ipatas and Southern Highlands Governor Anderson Agiru calling them "power hungry dogs" who were currently in "sheep skin".

He accused them of influencing Sir Michael to decommision Mr Polye as Deputy PM and appointed Mr Abal in his place, a move Mr Piari claimed, was orchestrated by the two Governors to kill NA in the Highlands and in Enga. Mr Piari called on Sir Michael Somare to immediately reinstate Mr Polye back as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Works, Transport and Civil Aviation. He claimed that the two governors had gone all out to kill NA in the Highlands in the last General Elections but that did not happen in the polls.

Mr Ipatas had denied being instrumental in the appointment of Mr Abal as Deputy PM and

said it was the prerogative of the Prime Minister. Foreign Affairs officials yesterday confirmed that Mr Polye was yet to move into his new office as Foreign Minister. Attempts to contact Mr Polye for comments were unsuccessful yesterday however a senior staff said the minister was reluctant to occupy his new office because he was humiliated by his removal from the DPM's office while he was still deputy leader of NA (Highland).

But it is understood that his refusal to take up the Foreign Ministry is a clear indication of what is likely to happen on the floor of Parliament which will meet on January 11 to elect a new Governor-General. A Minister (named) who is among the government MPs rallying to break ranks the government and move to the Opposition in support of its no-confidence vote said the government has a big problem. "The government does have a big problem. And the person who created the problem must fix it if stability within this NA led government is to remain till 2012 National Elections. The support is there but bad decisions were slowly destroying the government," this Minister said.

"It's very concerning seeing that foreign investors are setting up everywhere in the retail sector, she said. This is very visible in past six months. The private sector is very concerned as the Foreign Investors Act exits to protect the smaller operator and Samoan people in areas where there are too many players in the market. And the retail corner store is one of them. We're seeing so many retailers that are foreign investment."

The Act has a reserve schedule protecting five sectors: Buses, Taxis, Vehicles for Hire, and Retailing and Sawmilling.

It's very clear in its wording, "The business or economic activities listed in the Schedule shall be reserved for citizens of Samoa exclusively, and no approval may be given under this Act, or any other law, for a non-citizen to own or participate in any business or venture

that includes any of the activities in the Reserved List."

Commenting on the violent 2006 riots in the Solomon Islands where 90 percent of Honiara's Chinese-dominated business district were burned, civil servant George Manimu told local newspaper the Solomon Star: "business areas, often referred to as reserved for nationals, have become dominated by Asian entrepreneurs.

The actions of the people (the riots), although criminal, reflects the release of bottled up frustrations and anger that they could not contain any longer."

The same issue was behind the Tonga November 2006 riots noted Lintner, "there were hardly any Chinese-owned grocery stores in the capital Nuku'alofa 20 years ago. Now, more than 70 percent are owned by newly-arrived Chinese, whose wealth and savvy

have pushed local shopkeepers out of business."

This concern was written about by Swedish journalist, Bertil Lintner and author on several works on Asia in 2007.

"Fear of domination by economically more powerful immigrants may spark further clashes between Chinese and locals in the Pacific island states, introducing unrest in a region that until now has been relatively peaceful."

And this is the same concern aired by Samoa's Chamber of Commerce today.

"Don't get me wrong, said Lemalu. We welcome foreign investment for a big hotel chain and the like, but when it's a small corner shop, well that's what our people are doing. As long as we're a LDC (Least Developed Country) I don't think we need foreign investors in areas where our people are capable. The last thing we need is all the corner shops to be owned by a large chain of people that are wealthier and are more capable than our people at running a retail store because this is retailing, it's about making 5 and 10 sene [US 2 cents and 4 cents] per item. So it's not really something that we should open up to foreign investors. There's no way our people can compete with foreign investment in that type of business."

There is also the aesthetic environment and tourism perception of Samoa as a paradise that may be damaged as a result.

"We all know that in Tonga there are those overseas investors literally operating behind bars.

They take your money through a pigeon hole and pass you the goods through the same pigeon hole. And everywhere else they're barred up, why? Because they're protecting themselves from the locals. We don't want that here in Samoa.



ANTI-WAR PLACARD

A woman, seen from the media bus window, holds signs as President Barack Obama passes by in a motorcade in Kailua, Hawaii, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011.

PACIFIC BRIEFS

20 sailors rescued near Marshall Islands

HONOLULU (AP)—The U.S. Coast Guard says 20 sailors were rescued Friday near the Pacific's Marshall Islands after their boat sank in rough seas. The Jeljelet Ae was hauling construction materials from the Marshall port of Majuro to an island 200 miles (300 kilometers) away Thursday when the crew was forced to abandon ship and board life rafts. The Coast Guard says its Hawaii headquarters received a distress signal and quickly alerted other members of a multinational group that monitors problems in the vast reaches of the Pacific. The two life rafts carrying the crew were spotted by a search plane, which relayed the location to search vessels. The Guard says a fishing boat reached the rafts at 6 p.m. Friday and rescued all 20 crew members. The Guard said in a statement that the condition of the sailors wasn't immediately known.

European style supermarket in Vanuatu closes

PORT VILA, Vanuatu (Vanuatu Daily Post)—In Vanuatu, the new supermarket where Centre Point used to be may become a new six-storey building or something else in the near future now that the present company has gone into voluntary liquidation only one year after it opened for business. Liquidator Martin Saint Hilaire said the owner could not pay for the electricity bill, Vanuatu Brewery bill and rent anymore and went

into liquidation. The liquidator said the company owed Unelco approximately 10 million-vatu [US\$105,000], Vanuatu Brewery 10 million-vatu [US\$105,000] and the landlord 16 million-vatu [US\$168,400]. Meanwhile the supermarket was the pride of the Capital for those European residents who were used to shopping in their own supermarkets back home because its layout and goods were similar to any small supermarket in any country in the European Union.

PNG landowners threaten sabotage on gas project

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (The National)—A group of landowners of LNG project sites in Southern Highlands have warned that there will be no K50 billion PNG LNG project unless business development grant (BDG) issues are resolved. They also warned LNG developer ExxonMobil to be prepared to vacate all project sites next week as talks of sabotaging the project spreads. The landowners said this in response to the news of 16 legitimate landowner companies were paid a total of K89.208 million for spin-off business ventures last Thursday at March Girls resort outside Port Moresby. LNG landowners pressure group team leader Henry Duguno, in a statement, said a recent media statement by acting Prime Minister Sam Abal that all landowner companies would be paid their seed capital did not materialise when only 16 identified companies were paid.

New Zealand sought to restore relations with Fiji

» Wikileaks reveals communication between Kiwi, U.S. diplomats

SUVA, Fiji (Fijilive)—The New Zealand government met with Fiji's Foreign Minister to press the issue of restoring the country's diplomatic footprint within the island nation, a WikiLeaks cable has revealed.

According to the report released by WikiLeaks, New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Murray McCully met with his Fijian counterpart, Inoke Kubuabola in an effort to "revive the rocky relations" between the two countries.

The report which was for the U.S. Security Council in Washington highlighted a meeting between McCully and Kubuabola in which issues surrounding

Fiji's erratic visa issuance for the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) officials was discussed.

The cable also revealed John Adank, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Pacific Division Director, had outlined the unstable relationship between New Zealand and Fiji.

Adank noted that since 2007, three New Zealand diplomats have been expelled (one high commissioner and two acting high commissioners). He also said the "expulsions occur whenever the Bainimarama regime tires of New Zealand's travel restrictions."

He underlined that the situa-

tion in Fiji has deteriorated further over the past year and that the United States, New Zealand, Australia and other countries need to continue pressuring Fiji to restore democracy. He further stated that there is no sense that the regime in Fiji intends on engaging internally or externally on the issue.

Adank urged the United States to consider the reaction of other Pacific Island nations in any decision it takes with regard to Fiji.

It needs to be done in the "right light" and "managed carefully" to avoid driving a wedge between the Pacific Island countries, Adank said.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Motivating Mexico

Jack Riley left El Paso, Texas, to become the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's top man in Chicago. Even though he's 1,500 miles from the border now, Mexico's war against drug cartels still matters to him. It should matter to all of us. More than 90 percent of the marijuana, cocaine and heroin in the Chicago area enters the U.S. from Mexico. Drug rings are expanding into the Midwest to control distribution with violence a good bet to follow.

"If we're going to be successful, Mexico needs to be successful," Riley says. "We can't do it without them."

Sadly, Mexico is falling short.

Mexico's occasional triumphs are starting to seem more and more hollow as the death toll of the 4-year-long drug war tops ... 30,000. Every day seems to bring another horrific tale—most recently, cameras rolled while masked gunmen mowed down anti-crime activist Marisela Escobedo as she held vigil at the doorstep of the Chihuahua governor's palace.

If the mayhem continues unabated, we worry that Congress will lose the will to renew the \$1.4 billion Merida Initiative—an infusion of U.S. equipment and training to combat international drug trafficking and other organized crime—when it expires in about a year.

Now is the time to demand results from Mexico that have nothing to do with body counts.

Mexican President Felipe Calderon must take on the hard-headed nationalism of many Mexicans and speed up the integration of his law enforcement with ours. The Washington Post reported that Mexican authorities have benefited from DEA intelligence along the border.

Mexico also must fumigate corrupt local, state and federal law enforcement and start revamping a dysfunctional judicial system. U.S. officials estimate that only about 2 percent of those detained for offenses related to organized crime are even brought to trial.

This will all take time, of course, but Mexico's lack of urgency is distressing. This month, Mexico's Congress blocked an anti-crime package that would have cleaned up local police departments and strengthened penalties against the money laundering that feeds the drug rings.

Score one for politics over security.

Meanwhile, the leaked State Department cables offer a scathing U.S. assessment that much of Mexico's military and law-enforcement agencies remains an inefficient, petty, corrupt mess.

Some in Congress have had enough. This month, a bipartisan team of three senators proposed an independent commission to re-evaluate the U.S. approach to illegal narcotics in the Americas. As it is, Republicans are already skeptical of foreign aid while Democrats worry about militarizing drug enforcement in our hemisphere.

With much fanfare, the U.S. recently delivered three Black Hawk helicopters to Mexico. They made for a great photo op. But the vehicles and equipment are only as effective as the men and women on the front lines and in the halls of power.

They need to do better, especially if we are counting on them as our first line of defense.

(c) 2010, Chicago Tribune.



Russia's twisted 'rule of law'

When Dmitry Medvedev became president of Russia two years ago he pledged to combat "legal nihilism," the disrespect for law that feeds corruption and backwardness in his country.

Any hope that Medvedev might behave differently from his mentor, and Russia's real ruler—Prime Minister Vladimir Putin—has been doused by the biggest show trial since the days of the Soviet Union. A week ago, the former oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who's already served seven years in Siberian jails on trumped up tax-evasion charges, was found guilty in a second sham trial.

This time Khodorkovsky was convicted of stealing more than 200 million tons of oil from his former company, Yukos. Such a charge is ludicrous—this huge a theft couldn't have been hidden, and anyway, Yukos was on its way to becoming Russia's most transparent oil operation.

Khodorkovsky's real crime was that he financed liberal political groups and human rights foundations (other tycoons either fled or cozied up to the Kremlin). The oilman ran afoul of Putin, a two-term president who may run again after his current term as prime minister.

Apparently, Putin wants to ensure that Khodorkovsky stays in prison long after the next elections in 2012. A few weeks ago, when a TV interviewer asked the prime minister what he thought about the case, he responded: "A thief should sit in jail."

So no one in Russia was surprised at the verdict. But what makes this case so important to the West is what it reveals about Russia's direction. After Khodorkovsky's first trial, the government grabbed Yukos, Russia's best run private oil company, and handed it off to Kremlin insiders.

Law, shmaw, as international—and Russian—businessmen have learned to their peril. They must contend with what locals call "telephone justice," which means that a Russian official can call a judge and dictate the verdict.

Transparency International—which monitors corruption levels in 178 countries—ranked Russia as 154th in 2009. Dozens of Russian human rights workers and journalists who have tried to investigate corruption have been murdered, with few cases resolved.

Foreign leaders had hoped the youthful Medvedev—who talks the talk of modernization and high-tech innovation—might improve the legal climate. Almost four years ago at the Davos World Economic Forum, I asked Medvedev—a former law professor—whether he believed in "rule of law" or "rule by law," meaning the authoritarian practice of using laws to beat down the opposition. "Rule of law," he snapped.

If this is how Medvedev views himself, he has yet to demonstrate

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

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it in practice.

"None of the promises Medvedev made about reform in the country have materialized," says Pavel Khodorkovsky, the son of the defendant, and a young Internet entrepreneur. Speaking by phone from New York City, where he is now living, he said, "I was hopeful that Medvedev wanted to do something greater."

In a powerful statement, before the verdict was delivered, the elder Khodorkovsky laid out the obstacles that confront Russian modernizers.

"What must be going through the minds of the entrepreneurs," he asked, "or senior industrial managers, or simply an ordinary creative person, watching our trial, and knowing its result is absolutely predictable?"

"The obvious conclusion is frightening in its simplicity. The siloviki (powerful Russian bureaucrats who are now or were previously members of security agencies) can do anything. Those who clash with the system have no rights whatsoever.

"A government that destroys its best companies ... that is suspicious of its people ... is a sick government.

"Millions of eyes throughout all of Russia and throughout the whole world ... are watching for the outcome of this trial with the hope that Russia will after all become a country of freedom and of the law, where the law will be above bureaucratic officials."

Until then, Russia's innovators and talented entrepreneurs will be blocked; it will remain an oil-driven despotism unable to advance or to take its place among highly developed nations.

The Russian foreign ministry has told Western governments the Khodorkovsky case is none of their affair. Untrue. Russia aspires to be part of Europe, to join the World Trade Organization, yet its government's behavior will determine whether this is possible.

As Khodorkovsky awaits sentencing, his son holds out "a little hope" for a lenient jail term—or even a presidential pardon. Medvedev talks of "rule of law" for Russia and Putin talks of "the dictatorship of law." Which is it to be?

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The green card conundrum

“**M**arriage is a social union or legal contract between people that creates kinship.” This is a Wiki definition of marriage. USCIS’ definition is more on what it is not, rather than on what it is, and primarily to root out sham marriages that circumvent immigration rules.

Marriage and immigration. Two known Hollywood movies on the subject are the 1990 *Green Card* and the 2009 *The Proposal*. The first stars Gerard Depardieu and Andy McDowell, treating the issue as just a matter of an exterior decorator’s convenience, needing a spouse to qualify to buy a Manhattan apartment, and an illegal waiting on tables needing to stay.

The second has Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds in a story of high-powered she-devil Canadian editor sans-the-Prada-shoes, about to be deported, and her frequently put-upon assistant. She arranges for a paper marriage. Smart he puts up his own conditions and there spun a tale of comeuppance.

doubly tragic when the preponderant male migrant workers started dating Caucasian ladies! Anti-miscegenation laws were still in the books until 1967.

The USCIS has the discretion to investigate a marriage that may bring immigration benefits to aliens. Applied to Orientals (about two-thirds of the world’s population from Aden to the Dardanelles, the Urals to Kamchatka, Hokkaido to the highlands of New Guinea, Timor Triste to Maldives), and American Latinos, it is a cat-and-mouse game. To Aryans, it is for laughs, especially if involves Mediterranean tans and gypsies, but get painfully farcical with N.A.M.E. (North Africa Middle East) Semites.

No offense to USCIS officers; I’ve found the ones in Saipan to be genial and fair (save the grumpy front desk personnel and the airport sourpuss who might have been trained by the International Brotherhood of Overworked and Underpaid Clerks) but the laws that allows inordinate powers to immigration officers, and a maze to navigate through requisite paper trails, need massive

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune’s Opinion Section.



nial in the mail. No explanation was proffered. Pleadings to get her to visit the then bed-ridden husband was summarily denied. A CG personnel in Shenyang said, after the fourth visa application, “You are back again?” Two African-American interviewers only entrenched this Sino’s aversion for the darker skin. She never saw her husband alive again.

It is not having rules that we note, it is the arbitrary application

“The USCIS has the discretion to investigate a marriage that may bring immigration benefits to aliens. Applied to Orientals (about two-thirds of the world’s population from Aden to the Dardanelles, the Urals to Kamchatka, Hokkaido to the highlands of New Guinea, Timor Triste to Maldives), and American Latinos, it is a cat-and-mouse game. To Aryans, it is for laughs, especially if involves Mediterranean tans and gypsies, but get painfully farcical with N.A.M.E. (North Africa Middle East) Semites.”

A 1992 *Paper Marriage* drama did not fare well in the box office but Ang Lee’s 1993 *The Wedding Banquet* got critical acclaim for making light of a forbidden subject, a gay male marrying a Zhong Guo Ren to placate his parents as well as qualify Wei Wei for a green card. Ang Lee would later hit the Oscars with his *Brokeback Mountain*.

Green card romances as a comic subject made it to TV in *Wings*, *Will and Grace*, *Taxi*, *Friends*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Martin Laurence Show*, and even *Beverly Hills 90210*. The comic dimension, we suspect, might just be a giddy response to a serious subject whose history in the United States arose out of needing to filter certain racial groups from peopling the New World.

West Africans were the brunt of the vicious labor practice of slavery. Imported Orient labor barred family in joining lest they overwhelm the native population, and, of course, our seclusion laws were enacted to curtail certain racial migration. This was

upgrade. This is particularly needed in a time of glocalization when defense of national boundaries is not a matter of putting up barbwire and border walls, as it is a matter of opening the exclusive strictures of a mind in a world that has become inclusively interdependent.

If the USCIS suspects that a marriage is a “sham”, they have authority to investigate, often subjecting suspects to “harassment.” We can sell our booty in Nevada, hawk watered sugar from Atlanta, pass off clunky cars, parley legislative votes for corporate gains, but we cannot auction our connubial privileges inter alia for gain?

We wrote of an NYC retired acquaintance whose attempt to bring a bride home after marrying her in China and spending two winters in Dong Bei came to naught. His family interviewed in Guangzhou and the officer deemed the relationship not a bona fide marriage; the documents were not deemed worthy of its restroom value! English language-challenged spouse got an unsigned de-

of archaic legal norms that is in question, more so now in the CNMI as sponsoring U.S. citizens whose income does not come up to par with 125 percent of the federal poverty guidelines find difficulty in petitioning kin. Most of these citizens are Pacific islanders. The application of rules for the moment (until November 2011) is in flux. The office has been charitable so far, so applicants need to take advantage of the current favorable attitude. (My experience of the INS in Honolulu, Seattle, Brownsville, and International Falls were not pleasant.)

But this is neither here nor there. It is the larger issue of immigration in the glocal village that is at stake. Practices of exclusions in the United States have a long history of being counterproductive. A world that sees the U.S. Statue of Liberty as a beacon of hope awaits an upgrade, not only for our sake, but also for the rest of the world to follow. We may have to begin dusting off prejudices at the matrimonial “I do.”

Letters to the Editor

Americans with Dysfunctional Alcoholism (ADA)

The notion of a person battling with alcoholism is certainly not a laughing matter, but it makes me chuckle nonetheless. The truth is, and any respectable sot will tell you, that the relationship with alcohol is far less like a battle than it is a dance and not just any dance, but a slow, dirty dance—like in a speak-easy where the walls crash in on you from night to night, but by the next you’re back at it...boogieing down closer and closer to the surface of the floor each time. And that’s just it, nothing short of divine intervention will stop you except to hit bottom and even then it depends on whether or not you land face-first. You see, “drinking, once a habit, (becomes) an obsession, a true insanity that (condemns people) to drink against (their) will...in the late stages of drinking, the will to resist has fled” (A.A.’s co-founder). For some, falling off the wagon just isn’t enough. They need to be dragged behind it, backed over a few times and dragged some more before they even think to quit. But, that’s a choice and everyone is entitled to make their own.

Bottom, they say, is not the same for everyone—it’s higher or lower depending on the person’s tolerance for stupidity and other such things as pain, embarrassment, and/or loss. Among other things, alcoholism is a conniving co-pilot who will steer you directly into the heart of a lightning storm or head-first into a telephone pole and then convince you that he had nothing to do with it. Additionally, he’ll feed your body with poison so that you spend the day barfing into a bucket instead of going to work and then have you believe it’s because you don’t like your job...you know, the very thing that puts bread on the table or keeps a roof over your head. More often than not, people disassociate the ill effects of their alcoholism from the act of drinking alcohol.

This gets me to the original intent for writing which is to talk about the protections for alcoholics under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how it applies to employment. Simply put, the ADA does not protect your right to be a fall-down, jack-ass drunk rather it serves to facilitate treatment/rehabilitation and to clear a path to gainful employment without the obstacles of discrimination and other such prejudices. More specifically, the ADA restricts employment discrimination against people for being (1) a person who is substantially limited in a major life function, (2) regarded as a person who is substantially limited in a major life function, and/or (3) associated with a person who is substantially limited in a major life function. How that normally translates for the alcoholic is that an employer cannot terminate you from or deny you employment for being *regarded as* an alcoholic, but it does not mean that you can come to work drunk or miss an excessive amount of work due to being drunk and expect to keep your job because you’re an alcoholic. People, alcoholics or otherwise, have a responsibility to be qualified for their work and to carry out the essential functions of the job which oddly enough entails being present and working.

To state the obvious, sobriety is the only true alternative to being drunk. And, anyone who’s ever had one too many will attest that she (for me, sobriety is female) exudes an undeniable sense of euphoria and makes for a much more pleasant dance partner than the clumsy, old man that is being drunk.

Of course, talking about it is one thing, but practicing what we preach is whole other thing. The fact is, for many of us, drinking has become a way of life and the battle, as it were, is less about trying to quit than it is trying to stay functional...may we never become just another one of the countless Americans with Dysfunctional Al-

coholism. “God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference” (A.A.’s Serenity Prayer).

For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or about the rights of individuals with disabilities, please contact the NMPASI office at (670) 235-7273/4 [voice], 235-7275 [fax], 235-7278 [tty] or via the internet at www.nmpasi.com.

Jim Rayphand

Via email

An inspirational story

Great story on Angel Ray! It was well written and very comprehensive. You captured the essence of his goodness. I rarely meet youth with a heart that Angel possesses. He is a leader and that is why I support his efforts. I am so proud he has been named the *Saipan Tribune* Person of the Year. It is a well-deserved honor. I miss my friends in Saipan and am now in a position to help. Stories like yours inspire others to be an angel in their own way. Thank you for spreading happiness this Holiday Season.






Glenn Wakai

Former Hawaii State Rep.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

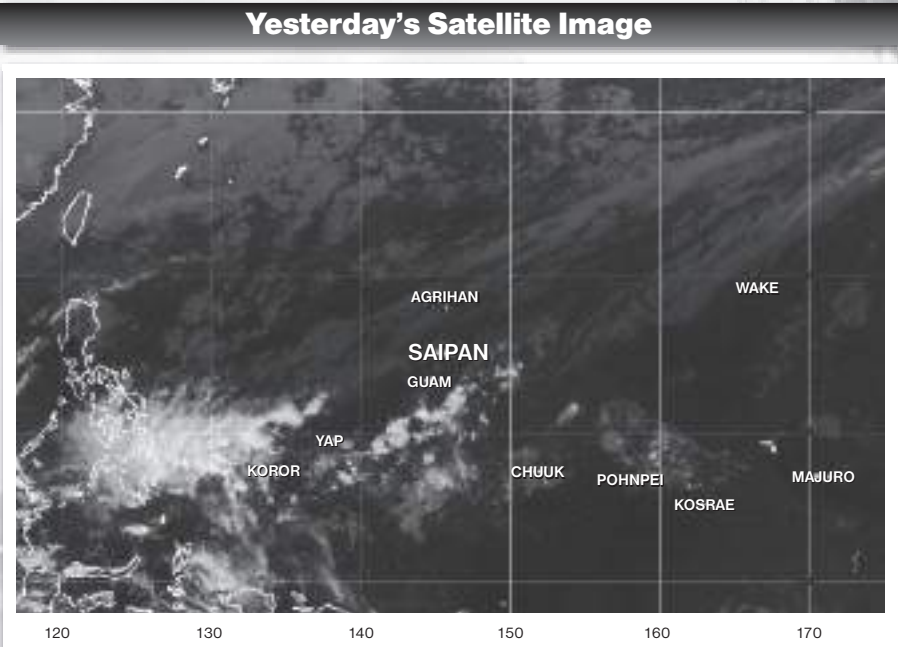
5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼78
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲84 ▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88 ▼76
Kosrae	Sunny	▲88 ▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲86 ▼76

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲74 ▼66
Beijing	Sunny	▲36 ▼14
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲61 ▼59
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲81 ▼71
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲38 ▼37
Los Angeles	Showers	▲59 ▼41
Manila	Thundershowers	▲84 ▼76
Melbourne	Sunny	▲74 ▼56
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲79 ▼60
New York	Sunny	▲36 ▼28
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲47 ▼36
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲33 ▼29
Pusan	Showers	▲42 ▼29
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲52 ▼38
Salem	Sunny	▲38 ▼29
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲56 ▼45
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲32 ▼19
Tokyo	Showers	▲49 ▼35
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲42 ▼31

Tides			
Saipan Harbor			
1:35 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
8:46 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
2:00 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
6:44 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front stretches southwestward from 25N173E to just northwest of Wake Island at 20N165E then continues as a diffuse shear line to Rota at 14N145E and finally to beyond 130E at 9N. Clouds and patchy rain are present along and up to 180 miles northwest of the cold front. Clouds and widely scattered showers are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough reaches southeastward from Mindanao through 6N130E to end at EQ142E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are present north of Koror and Yap within 65 miles of a line from 8N130E to 11N136E. Similar weather is also seen near the trough axis south of Koror between 6N and 9N from 130E to 135E. A surface trough runs northeastward from 1N143E to 15N150E. Scattered showers are evident near the trough or south and east of the Marianas within 70 miles of a line from 8N143E to 17N153E and also west of Chuuk within 100 miles of a line from 4N144E to 9N148E. Trade-wind convergence is causing widely scattered showers over Chuuk between 6N and 9N from 151E to 155E and also east of Pohnpei within 110 miles of a line from 11N157E to 7N163E.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:44 AM	5:59 PM	Today	6:21 AM	5:53 PM
Wednesday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM	Wednesday	7:10 AM	6:48 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM	Thursday	7:54 AM	7:40 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM	Friday	8:35 AM	8:30 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM	Saturday	9:13 AM	9:17 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
SAIPAN-GUAM					GUAM-SAIPAN				
C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily		C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily	
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6		C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6	
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7		C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7		C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7		C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7	
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily		C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily	
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily		C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily	
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)					NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN				
DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily		DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily	
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6		DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7	
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily		DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily	
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)					OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN				
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily		OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily	
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)					BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN				
OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7		OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7	
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)					SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN				
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1		OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7	
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7		OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX	
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7		OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7	
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX		OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)					SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN				
FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6		FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5	
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)					BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN				
CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only		CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only	
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN				
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN		OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN	
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM		DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7	
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT		C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM	
C09313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM		OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
C09313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau		OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
C09603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM		PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM	
C09603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau		PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM	
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN		C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau	
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7		C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau	
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM		C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM	
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM		C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM	
					C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM	
					C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM	
SAIPAN-HONG KONG					HONG KONG-SAIPAN				
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN		OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	
C09603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM		OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN		C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM	
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)									

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE							
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily

Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 200	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				

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Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
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A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

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- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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Business

Apple's absence to be felt at CES gadget show

By **PETER SVENSSON**
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

What do you call it when you have 120,000 people and an elephant in the room?

The International Consumer Electronics Show, which kicks off this week in Las Vegas.

The elephant is Apple Inc. It won't be at the show this year, but its tablet computer, the iPad, is the most important new product for an industry that needs to once again excite consumers. Sales of the iPad have been strong since its April debut, and the whole industry is now trying to mimic Apple's success.

With the iPad, Apple single-

handedly cracked the code for the tablet, a device that dozens of manufacturers have tried to take to the masses for two decades, with little success.

Apple itself doesn't do trade shows. When Apple has new products to reveal, such as iPads or iPhones, it stages its own events.

But nearly every other company in the industry will be there for CES, which runs Thursday to Sunday and is the largest trade show of any kind in the Americas. A good many of them will show off their tablets—computing slabs with touch-sensitive screens. Big names expected to do so include

Motorola Inc. and Dell Inc.

DisplaySearch analyst Richard Semenza estimated that a hundred different tablet models are in development, though not all of them will reach store shelves.

Competing tablets will have a hard time catching up to Apple's lead, at least this year. Certainly, no one managed to do so last year, even though a lot of manufacturers, including Dell, brought out tablets. Samsung did have some success with its Galaxy Tab, but sales didn't come close to the iPad's.

"For the next year or two, we expect there to be a lot of false starts, failed attempts, and di-

sasters," Richard Shim, another DisplaySearch analyst, said in a blog post.

Apple sold 7.4 million iPads through September, in the device's first six months on sale. That means they're already out-selling Apple's Mac computers, but not iPods or iPhones.

Analyst Shaw Wu at Kaufman Bros. believes Apple sold another 6.1 million iPads in the holiday quarter, and there's every indication that it was a popular holiday gift. Even some retailers that don't normally sell electronics, including TJ Maxx, carried the iPad.

Apple's would-be competitors include Motorola, which has been hinting that it will show off its first tablet at the show. Dell and Acer Inc. are also expected to show tablets. Microsoft Corp. CEO Steve

Ballmer will likely touch on tablets in his keynote speech Wednesday, an annual fixture the eve of the show's opening.

The electronics industry's need for a hot new product is especially strong this year. Overall, the recent holiday season was the best for retailers since 2007, but electronics sales were up just 1.2 percent from the previous year, according to MasterCard SpendingPulse, which tracks spending across all transactions, including cash. They're still down 10 percent from pre-recession levels.

For about five years, the industry has been bolstered by Americans rushing out to buy flat-panel TVs. Now, that rush is slowing, as 61 percent of households already have such sets, according to Leichtman Research Group.

Meanwhile, sales of other products that have driven growth, such as GPS units, picture frames and digital cameras, have tapered off. The people who really want them already have them, while the rest make do with their cell phones instead.

Other technologies that have been promoted at CES in recent years have been met with tepid interest from consumers.

At last year's CES, Japanese and Korean TV makers showed off 3-D TVs as a way to keep consumers buying newer TVs. But when the sets hits stores a few months later, sales were disappointing. Samsung Electronics Co. estimates all manufacturers combined sold 1 million 3-D sets in the U.S. in 2010, far short of its initial estimate of 3 million to 4 million.

Obama aide: Don't 'play chicken' with debt ceiling

WASHINGTON (AP)—Some Republican lawmakers said Sunday they opposed raising the ceiling on the nation's debt without tackling government spending, and President Barack Obama's top economic adviser warned against "playing chicken" on the issue.

The federal debt is limited to \$14.3 trillion, but the debt now stands at nearly \$13.9 trillion and is growing daily. Congress last raised the debt ceiling in February 2010 and is expected to consider raising it again as early as March.

To some conservatives, refusing to raise the limit on the federal debt could be an effective tactic to force lawmakers into cutting spending and facing such contentious issues as the rising costs of Social Security, Medicare and other entitlement programs.

Austan Goolsbee, the chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, said that refusing to raise the debt ceiling would essentially push

the country into defaulting on its financial obligations for the first time in its history.

"The impact on the economy would be catastrophic," Goolsbee told "This Week" on ABC. "That would be a worse financial economic crisis than anything we saw in 2008."



Obama

Goolsbee added: "I don't see why anybody's talking about playing chicken with the debt ceiling."

While saying that defaulting would be "very bad" for the U.S. position in the world, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said he would not vote for raising the limit on the federal debt unless there were a plan in place for dealing with long-term obligations, including Social Security, and for returning to 2008 spending levels.

"This is an opportunity to make sure the government is changing its spending ways," Graham said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Democratic Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida

and Anthony Weiner of New York want to see how the new Republican majority in the House will handle the issue.

"The Republicans have come in saying that they're going to not raise the debt ceiling and they're going to allow the full faith and credit of the American people to go down the tubes," Weiner said on "Face the Nation" on CBS. "It's their ship to run now. That's the responsibility."

Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., appearing with the Democrats, asked people to sign an online petition to urge their representatives not to increase the debt limit.

"It's not good for anyone to shut the government down," she said. "That's why I think it's important for the Democrats who are so willing to spend money to now be a part of trying to figure out how we can be responsible."

Rep.-elect Mike Kelly, R-Pa., a car dealer elected to the House in November, spoke against the idea of the government spending money it doesn't have.

"Raising the debt ceiling, to me, is absolutely irresponsible," Kelly said.

their iPhone alarm for a single wake-up rather than recurring use found the alarm didn't go off with the year's arrival, Apple Inc. spokeswoman Natalie Harrison said Sunday. A fix is in the works, and all iPhone alarms will work properly starting Monday, she said.

Iraq's daily oil production exceeds 2.7M barrels

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's oil minister said Sunday the country's oil production has increased by about 100,000 barrels a day, exceeding 2.7 million barrels. Abdul-Karim Elaihi also said that Iraq's oil exports will continue to rise and are expected to top two million barrels per day by the end of January, up from daily average of 1.95 million barrels shipped abroad last month. Oil revenues make up nearly 95 percent of Iraq's budget, and the increase in production and exports is vital to bringing the country sorely needed cash for reconstruction after decades of conflict and sanctions.



AP

In this Jan. 6, 2010 file photo, Microsoft Entertainment and Devices Division President Robbie Bach speaks during CEO Steve Ballmer's keynote address at the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas.

NTSB: American Airlines mishandled plane data

By **MARK JEWELL**
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Federal officials investigating an incident in which an American Airlines jet went off the end of a runway say the airline improperly downloaded information from the plane's flight recorder before turning it over to the government.

The National Transportation Safety Board called the download a violation of its standards, and barred American Airlines from further participation in the inquiry into Wednesday's incident at Wyoming's Jackson Hole Airport.

A Boeing 757 carrying 181 passengers and crew members landed on a runway and came to rest in hard-packed snow about 350 feet beyond the runway overrun area, the NTSB said. No one aboard Flight 2253 from Chicago was injured, and the plane was not damaged.

The NTSB said on Friday that it learned that the plane's digital flight data recorder was flown to Tulsa, Okla., where American Airlines technicians downloaded information from the instrument before turning it over to the agency in Washington, D.C., the evening after the runway incident. American Airlines did not access the plane's cockpit voice recorder, the NTSB said.

The NTSB requires in such instances that airlines transport recorders to NTSB labs without accessing the information, the agency said.

Agency investigators determined no information from the American Airlines jet was missing or altered.

But NTSB Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman said in a statement that the data download was a "breach of protocol" that violates standards for any organization that is allowed to participate in

an agency investigation.

Adherence to standards "is vital to the integrity of our investigative processes," she said.

She said her agency has barred American Airlines "from further participation in this incident investigation."

American Airlines spokeswoman Mary Frances Fagan said in a prepared statement that the airline downloaded information from the flight recorder "as part of its normal safety investigation of the incident."

The data from the recorder was never compromised, she said, and there "was no attempt to circumvent any collaborative process with the NTSB" or the Federal Aviation Administration.

She said American has begun an internal review of its procedures to ensure they comply with NTSB procedures.

American is a unit of Fort Worth, Texas-based AMR Corp.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Russia orders halt to Tu-154B flights after fire

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's transport oversight agency on Sunday ordered the country's airlines to stop using Tu-154B planes until the cause of a passenger jet fire and explosion that killed three people is determined. A spokesman for the agency, Sergei Romanchev, said airlines must obey the order. The state news agency RIA Novosti said there are 14 Tu-154Bs in service in Russia. The Tu-154B is one variant of the Tu-154 model, which has been in service since the early 1970s and has been in wide use on Russian internal flights and extensively in other countries, including Iran and former Soviet republics.

2011 starts with a glitch for some iPhone users

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP)—Many iPhone customers had some explaining to do after they overslept to start the new year, due to a glitch in the gadget's alarm clock feature. Users who set

Nation

Navy to investigate lewd videos shown on carrier

NORFOLK, Va. (AP)—The Navy said Sunday it will investigate “clearly inappropriate” videos broadcast to the crew of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in which a top officer of the ship used gay slurs, mimicked masturbation and opened the shower curtain on women pretending to bathe together.

The star of the videos, made in 2006 and 2007, is a former Top Gun pilot who now commands the same ship, the Norfolk-based USS *Enterprise*, which was deployed in the Middle East at the time and is weeks from deploying again.

The *Virginian-Pilot* newspaper reported on the videos in its Saturday editions and posted an edited version of one video on its website.

Capt. Owen Honors appeared in the videos while he was the USS *Enterprise*’s executive officer—the second in command—and they aired on the ship’s closed-circuit television. Honors took over as the ship’s commander in May.

It’s not immediately known why the videos are surfacing now. The *Virginian-Pilot* quoted anonymous crew members who said they raised concerns aboard the ship about the videos when they aired, but they were brushed off.

It’s clear from the videos that Honors had already gotten complaints when some of them were made. “Over the years I’ve gotten several complaints about inappropriate material during these videos, never to me personally but, gutlessly, through other channels,” he said in the introduction to the video posted by the newspaper.

In the same segment, Honors uses a derogatory term for gays.

Next comes a sequence of what appear to be outtakes in which Honors and others curse, followed by clips in which he and others are shown making hand motions that mimic masturbation.

Honors segues to the next segment by saying, “Finally let’s get to my favorite topic ... chicks in the shower.” Next are shown clips of pairs of women and a pair of men pretending to shower together. No nudity is shown, but the men’s and women’s bare shoulders imply they are nude.

Other clips in the video show a man in drag and a mock rectal examination.

Navy spokesman Cmdr. Chris Sims said in a statement sent to The Associated Press that the videos “were not acceptable then and are not acceptable in today’s Navy.”

Executive officers and other leaders “are charged to lead by



In this frame grab taken from video obtained by the *Virginian-Pilot* newspaper, U.S. Navy Capt. Owen Honors appears in one of a series of profanity-laced comedy sketches that were broadcast on the USS *Enterprise* via closed-circuit television.

example and are held accountable for setting the proper tone and upholding the standards of honor, courage and commitment that we expect sailors to exemplify,” he said.

Sims said U.S. Fleet Forces Command “has initiated an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the production of these videos.”

In a statement to the *Virginian-Pilot* on Friday, however, the Navy said it had put a stop to videos with “inappropriate content” on the *Enterprise* several years ago.

“It is unfortunate that copies of these videos remained accessible to crewmembers, especially after leadership took action approximately four years

ago to ensure any future videos reflected the proper tone,” the Navy said.

It also said the videos “were intended to be humorous skits focusing the crew’s attention on specific issues such as port visits, traffic safety, water conservation, ship cleanliness, etc.”

A phone listing for Honors was not immediately available.

He is a 1983 alumnus of the U.S. Naval Academy and was a naval aviator before holding command. He attended the U.S. Naval Fighter Weapons School, also known as Top Gun.

The newspaper reported that the videos were made during the *Enterprise*’s two six-month deployments to the Middle East in 2006 and 2007.

Commissioned in 1961, the *Enterprise* is the world’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. It is scheduled to sail two more deployments before it is decommissioned in 2013. It can carry a crew of more than 5,800.

The commanding officer of the *Enterprise* at the time the videos were made, Lawrence Rice, was later promoted to the rank of the rear admiral and had been assigned to the Norfolk-based U.S. Joint Forces Command, but is no longer there, a spokeswoman said.

The video posted by the newspaper included clips of past “movies” Honors had made—including several statements in which he holds his higher-ups blameless for the material.

“As usual, the admiral and the captain have no idea about the contents of the video or movie this evening, and they should not be held accountable in any judicial setting,” Honors says.

Obama signs Sept. 11 first responders bill

HONOLULU (AP)—President Barack Obama said Sunday he was honored to sign a bill to provide aid to survivors of the Sept. 11 attacks and first responders who became ill working in the ruins at the World Trade Center.

“We will never forget the selfless courage demonstrated by the firefighters, police officers and first responders who risked their lives to save others,” Obama said in a statement. “I believe this is a critical step for those who continue to bear the physical scars of those attacks.”

The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act was named after a police officer who died of a respiratory disease

he contracted during the 9/11 rescue operations. The bill was one of the last measures Congress passed before adjourning in December.

Some Republicans tried to block the measure, saying they were concerned with how to pay for the bill. They dropped their opposition after lawmakers struck a compromise to reduce the costs.

The \$4.2 billion measure will be paid for with a fee on some foreign companies that get U.S. government procurement contracts.

“At long last, the President’s signature has ended our nine-year struggle to address the

9/11 health crisis. The Zadroga law will save lives and fulfills our moral obligation to care for those who rose to the defense of America in a time of war,” said Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y.

“This is a great victory for the heroes of September 11th, the firefighters, police officers and construction workers. Justice is finally being served,” added Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y.

New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly hailed the passage of the bill. “The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were an attack on America by a foreign enemy and addressing its health

impacts is a national duty,” Bloomberg said.

There was no signing ceremony for the bill; Obama signed it privately at the rented ocean-front home in Hawaii where he’s staying with his family.

White House spokesman Bill Burton said Obama had 10 days to sign the bill after its passage, a window that would have closed by the time the president returned to Washington Tuesday. Because the White House didn’t receive the official bill until after Obama departed Washington Dec. 22, Burton said a staff member who was headed to Hawaii after the president carried it here for his signature.

ACROSS THE NATION

1 week after blizzard, NYC garbage is piled high

NEW YORK (AP)—One week after a blizzard paralyzed the city, it’s more than 6 feet deep in spots. Not the snow—the trash. “It is absolutely ridiculous,” griped Brooklyn resident Gilbert Lee, who said a week was too long for the garbage to sit. “It’s over 6 feet tall. It’s a great wall of trash sitting in front of my apartment, all up and down Flatbush Avenue. It’s just absolutely unacceptable.” The Department of Sanitation announced it would resume garbage pickups on Monday for the first time since the Christmas weekend storm dumped 20 inches of snow on city streets. Trash collection was suspended while crews struggled to plow streets, Sanitation Commissioner John Doherty said.

Reports of sea lion shootings on rise in Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The weak and woozy California sea lion found on a San Francisco Bay-area beach in December with buckshot embedded in its skull has become an all-too-common sight for wildlife officials. Wildlife officials have seen a slight rise in the shooting of ocean mammals in recent years, and investigators often struggle to find a culprit. There are few witnesses to such shootings, making it nearly impossible to bring a case. “We always try to do an investigation, but unless there’s an eyewitness to the shooting it’s hard to make a case for our enforcement folks,” said Joe Cordaro, a wildlife biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who tracks reports of the shootings.

Family says teen killed at Atlanta train station

ATLANTA (AP)—Friends and family say a 14-year-old boy who went out for a midnight celebration was knifed to death at a downtown Atlanta train station after he was accosted by a man who accused him of stealing a cell phone. Rueben Hand was killed early Saturday as he was heading home with friends after attending the New Year’s Eve Peach Drop at Underground Atlanta, relatives told the media. Hand and a friend were about to get on a MARTA transit system train when a man accused them of stealing his cell phone, said 18-year-old Diamante Drake, who said he was with Hand at the station. After the teens told them man they didn’t have his phone, an argument began, Drake told WGCL-TV.

GOP agenda: Major impact may be on 2012 election

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Republican agenda for the new Congress that convenes Wednesday may have a greater impact on the 2012 elections than on the lives of Americans in the next two years.

Republicans promise to cut spending, roll back President Barack Obama’s health care overhaul and prevent unelected bureaucrats from expanding the government’s role in society through regulations that tell people what they must or can’t do. Getting this agenda through the

House may be easier than in the Senate, given the GOP’s 241-194 majority in the House. Getting the Senate to act will be a challenge. Democrats still hold an edge there, though smaller than the one Obama had during his first two years in the White House.

Even if the next two years end in gridlock, Republicans will have built a record for the next election that they hope will demonstrate to voters that they can get it right.

House Republicans also pledge to hold tough investigations and hearings on the president’s pro-

grams and policies, ending the free pass that Democratic committee chairmen gave the Obama administration the past two years.

Republicans insist they’ll bring key administration officials before congressional microphones and that the public can watch the webcasts. The friendly tone of inquiry from Democratic chairmen will be replaced by Republicans demanding answers to these questions: What’s the purpose of this program? Is this the best use of the taxpayers’ money?

The chief Republican investigator, Rep. Darrell Issa of California, is raring to get started, and he’s not alone. Issa, the incoming chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, has been especially critical of what he calls waste in Obama’s economic stimulus spending.

“The sooner the administration figures out that the enemy is the bureaucracy and the wasteful spending, not the other party, the better off we’ll be,” he told “Fox News Sunday.”

Asia

SKorea leader talks tough but opens door to talks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's president vowed Monday not to let North Korea "covet even an inch of our territory." But he also opened the door to possible peace talks, saying North Korean disarmament could lead to South Korean economic aid.

Lee Myung-bak, addressing the country in a New Year's speech, said the Nov. 23 shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, which killed four and has spiked fears of war, was a transformational event. Seoul, he said, would treat it as the United States did the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and "overhaul our defense posture."

However, he said, "if the North exhibits sincerity, we have both the will and the plan to drastically enhance economic cooperation." Washington and Seoul have demanded that the North fulfill past nuclear disarmament commitments before allowing the resumption of stalled international aid-for-disarmament talks.

Still, the overwhelming focus of Lee's comments on North Korea was a tough promise to improve South Korea's defenses and to hit back hard if attacked again.

"The situation before and af-

ter the provocation against Yeonpyeong Island cannot be the same," Lee said. "Any provocation that would pose a threat to our lives and property will not be tolerated. Such provocations will be met with stern, strong responses."

Lee was severely criticized for acting too slowly and too weakly after the shelling near the Koreas' disputed western sea border—the North's first attack on a civilian area since the 1950-53 Korean War. His government has responded by replacing the defense chief, strengthening security and pushing to deploy additional troops and weaponry to Yeonpyeong, which lies just seven miles (11 kilometers) from North Korean shores.

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the United States "went back to the drawing board to devise new security and national strategies, because the safety and security of its people had come under threat," Lee said.

"The shelling of Yeonpyeong Island also served as an opportunity for us to reflect on our security readiness and overhaul our defense posture," he said. "There cannot be any delay in establishing security measures."

Despite his strong words, Lee



South Korean soldiers watch a live TV reporting South Korean President Lee Myung-bak speaks to the nation during his New Year's speech at Seoul Train Station in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, Jan. 3, 2011.

also said peace between the two Koreas is still possible. "The door for dialogue is still open," he said.

Under Lee's conservative administration, relations between the two Koreas have deteriorated as he reversed policies of earlier liberal-leaning administrations he saw as rewarding aggression.

Since taking office in early 2008, Lee has halted unconditional aid to the impoverished

North and linked South Korean assistance to progress in North Korea's disarmament efforts. That stance enraged Pyongyang, which cut off reconciliation talks and branded Lee "human scum" and a traitor to Korean reunification.

Tensions on the Korean peninsula are often high—the countries remain technically in a state of war because their 1950s war ended in a truce, not a peace treaty. But the North's Novem-

ber shelling and subsequent South Korean military live-fire drills on Yeonpyeong and near the Koreas' tense land border have put the region on edge and fired fears of renewed violence.

The North attacked Yeonpyeong, killing two civilians and two marines, after warning the South not to conduct live-fire drills there. North Korea claims the waters around Yeonpyeong as its own territory, refusing to recognize the maritime bound-

ary drawn in 1953 by the United Nations without consulting with the North.

Lee's speech came two days after North Korea issued its own New Year's message. Pyongyang called for better ties and the resumption of joint projects with South Korea. It also reiterated its commitment to ridding the peninsula of atomic weapons and warned that a war would trigger a "nuclear holocaust."

Meanwhile, the United States, which has about 28,000 troops in the South, is pushing ahead with diplomacy meant to find a way to ease tensions.

President Barack Obama's top envoy on North Korea, Stephen Bosworth, and Sung Kim, the U.S. envoy to stalled nuclear disarmament talks, are to arrive in Seoul on Tuesday and then travel on to Beijing and Tokyo later this week. U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates is planning a visit to Seoul next week.

And on Jan. 19 Chinese President Hu Jintao will be feted in Washington by Obama with a state dinner. China is the North's only major ally and main benefactor, and the Hu-Obama meeting will be closely watched to see if any diplomatic breakthrough can be made.

Pakistani gov't in dire straits as key party quits

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's ruling party struggled to keep its grip on power Monday after a coalition partner said it would join the opposition and threatened to bring the government down.

The political crisis all but guarantees lawmakers will make no progress anytime soon on solving the critical economic problems that have forced the country to rely on \$11 billion in loans from the International Monetary Fund.

The political posturing could also distract the government from its alliance with the U.S. against Islamist militancy, though security is largely the purview of the powerful military.

For ordinary Pakistanis, however, it's the rising inflation, chronic power outages and other daily hardships that are the most important issue.

On New Year's eve, the government announced hikes in petrol, diesel and kerosene prices, angering many—and giving the Muttahida Qaumi Movement another reason to part ways with the ruling Pakistan People's Party.

"The petrol bomb the government has dropped on the people of Pakistan has forced our party to part ways with such

insane decisions," said Faisal Subzwari, an MQM leader.

The party had already said it was quitting the Cabinet last week. Another, smaller party, the Jamiat Ulema Islam, announced in December it would switch to the opposition. Without the two, the ruling coalition will fall short of the 172 seats needed to keep a majority.

Ruling party leaders said they were trying to work out their differences with the MQM, and Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said he was confident the government could maintain its majority.

If the government cannot hold together its majority coalition or form a new one, it could face a no-confidence vote and midterm elections. Analysts said the ruling party had only weeks, if not days, to try to prevent the government's collapse.

Poor relations between the MQM and the main opposition party, Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N, give the ruling party some breathing space.

Sharif's party also would be loath to try to take the reins of a new government at such a difficult time, said Hasan Askari-Rizvi, a political analyst.

Relief flights help flood-affected Australian city

BRISBANE, Australia (AP)—Military flights rushed Monday to restock an Australian city before it is cut off by floodwaters that have turned a huge swath of the Outback into a lake, while police confirmed two more deaths in the crisis.

The death toll from some of Australia's worst flooding in a decade is three since Saturday, though police in Queensland state say several other people have drowned in separate incidents involving swollen rivers and water accidents since tropical deluges began in late November. In total, 10 people have died, police said Monday.

Chief Superintendent Alistair Dawson said the latest victim was a man who drowned on Monday when the car he was traveling in was washed off a flooded causeway in the town of

Aramac, in central Queensland.

Earlier Monday, police said in a statement they had recovered the body of a man who was last seen on Saturday as his small boat was swamped by raging river waters in a different part of the state. In a separate incident also on Saturday, a 41-year-old woman was swept to her death in front of her family as her car crossed a swamped causeway.

Drenching rain that fell for days starting shortly before Christmas have produced floodwaters that now cover an area the size of France and Germany combined in northeastern Queensland. The waters have filled rivers to overflowing and inundated at least 22 towns and cities in the cattle and fruit and vegetable farming region, as they drain slowly toward the coast.

State authorities say about

200,000 people have been affected by the floods, and Prime Minister Julia Gillard on Monday extended emergency relief to those affected, including low-interest loans to farmers to begin cleaning up and get their businesses running again.

"This is a major natural disaster, and recovery will take a significant amount of time," Gillard said. The damage could ultimately amount to hundreds of millions of dollars, she told reporters.

In Rockhampton, a coastal city of about 75,000 people, waters from the still-swelling Fitzroy River closed the airport and cut the main highway leading to the state capital of Brisbane.

Scores of families abandoned their homes for relief centers set up on high ground. Mayor Brad Carter has said about 40 percent of the city could be af-

ected by the surging waters, and residents could be forced to wait at least two weeks before returning home.

Authorities warned the Fitzroy would continue rising until late Tuesday or early Wednesday local time, cutting the northern road approach to the city as well.

Residents emptied supermarket shelves of food and bottled water in recent days as they stocked up to reduce the need to get around in waist-deep waters.

Acting Defense Minister Warren Snowdon said a C-130 military cargo plane would fly on Monday to a town north of Rockhampton carrying food, medical supplies and other items that would then be trucked to the stricken city. Another flight would follow on Tuesday if the highway into Rockhampton remained open.

ASIAN BRIEFS

7 killed as Philippine bus collides with jeep

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Police say a bus has collided with a passenger jeep in a province south of Manila, killing seven members of a family who were returning home from a Christmas vacation. Police official Alberto Supapo says the bus was overtaking a car on Sunday when it hit the Manila-bound jeep in the opposite lane of a highway in Ibaan town in Batangas province. Police investigator Nelio Lopez says the collision killed the jeep driver and six of his passengers who were siblings. They were among thousands who were heading back to Manila at the end of the Christmas holiday.

Landslide in Philippines kills 2 young children

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A landslide following days of heavy rain in the central Philippines has killed a 1-year-old baby and his 5-year-old sister while another child has been rescued. Civil defense

administrator Benito Ramos says about 1,000 residents of St. Bernard township on Leyte Island have sought shelter at a gymnasium and nearby schools after the landslide hit Sunday. He said Monday that one 7-year-old boy who survived was pulled out from the debris about five hours later by a team of local officials, police and soldiers. His condition is unknown.

Police: Bomb kills civilian in west Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A police official in the western Afghan province of Herat says a bomb planted outside a butcher shop has killed a civilian. Noor Khan Nekzad, the spokesman for the provincial police chief, said the bomb, believed to be set on a timer, exploded at 8 a.m. on Monday in the city of Herat. Nekzad said four other civilians were wounded. He said the butcher supplied meat to the Afghan army, and the bomb apparently targeted security forces.

World

Israeli PM wants nonstop talks with Palestinians

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's prime minister on Sunday proposed nonstop, face-to-face talks with the Palestinian president until a peace agreement is reached—offering a possible way to advance talks that have stalled over the construction of Jewish settlements.

Benjamin Netanyahu's proposal offers the appeal of leaders working together to make history, and it comes in response to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' latest claim—made over the weekend in South America—that genuine talks could yield a deal within months. But the Palestinians showed little enthusiasm for Netanyahu's offer.

Reached by The Associated Press in Brazil on Sunday, Abbas reiterated his call for a settlement freeze. "If he does so, we can reach an agreement

not in six months, but in two months," he said.

Abbas' chief negotiator, Saeb Erekat, said Netanyahu's offer amounted to little more than an empty declaration. He called on the Israeli leader to spell out a vision of peace, and specifically to commit to a near-complete withdrawal from the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

In his comments Sunday, Netanyahu urged the Palestinians to turn their focus away from settlements and instead work with him on the broader issues needed to reach a final peace deal.

He said he was ready to sit with Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, for "continuous direct one-on-one negotiations until white smoke is wafting," an allusion to the Vatican's custom for announcing a new pope.

"If Abu Mazen agrees to my

proposal of directly discussing all the core issues, we will know very quickly if we can reach an agreement," he said.

Netanyahu did not spell out details, but his new approach would be based on the idea that all the outstanding issues would be on the table, as opposed to the Palestinian approach of demanding a settlement freeze and general agreement on borders before talks resume.

President Barack Obama has made Mideast peace a top priority, personally launching the latest round of negotiations at the White House in early September and pledging to forge a deal within a year. But the U.S.-brokered talks broke down just three weeks later with the expiration of a limited Israeli freeze on settlement construction.

Netanyahu grudgingly accept-

ed the principle of a Palestinian right to statehood only two years ago, and the past months' diplomatic difficulties have deepened the Palestinians' distrust. Appearing to despair of restarting talks, they have embarked on a parallel track of seeking recognition by world governments for a Palestinian state even without Israeli agreement.

The Palestinians want a state in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem, areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war. They say that Israel's construction in these areas is a sign of

bad faith and refuse to renew talks until settlement building is frozen again.

Israel has refused, and U.S. officials have been unable to find a way to get talks moving again. There was no immediate comment from the Americans on Netanyahu's latest idea, which—in ratcheting up the level and intensity of negotiation—could offer a creative way to sidestep the settlement issue.

The fate of the settlements is critical to any future deal. Some 300,000 settlers now live in the West Bank, in addi-

tion to 200,000 Israelis living in east Jerusalem.

Talks would have to also address other difficult issues: final borders between Israel and a future Palestine; the fate of Palestinian refugees and their millions of descendants; and perhaps most explosive, the competing claims to the holy city of Jerusalem, which Netanyahu has insisted must remain entirely Israeli. The gaps on all these issues are wide—although previous, more liberal Israeli governments did make progress on borders.

Magnitude-7.1 quake shakes southern Chile

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)—A magnitude-7.1 earthquake shook southern Chile on Sunday, prompting tens of thousands to flee the coast for higher ground amid fears it could generate a tsunami like the one that ravaged the area last year.

There were no reports of deaths or damage, and Vicente Nunez, head of the National Emergency Office, said no tsunami alert was issued.

"There has been no harm to people, no harm to property," Nunez said. "We will continue monitoring."

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii also said a destructive Pacific Ocean-wide tsunami was not expected.

President Sebastian Pinera urged calm in an address to the nation.

"There was an exercise of self-evacuation, which is exactly what we have asked people to do," Pinera said. "Fortunately we do not have to lament accidents or losses of life."

Some cell-phone commu-

nications and electrical power were knocked out in the Araucania region where the quake was centered, 370 miles (595 kilometers) south-southwest of the capital, Santiago.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the epicenter was about 45 miles (70 kilometers) away

there was at least one aftershock of 5.0 magnitude.

When the first temblor struck, people in several coastal cities quickly moved away from the ocean, abandoning some shopping centers entirely.

In the communities of La Araucania, Puerto Saavedra, Tolten and Teodoro Smith, an estimated 50,000 people voluntarily evacuated to higher ground, according to Nunez.

Hundreds of tourists spending the New Year's holiday at the resorts of Villarica and Pucon cut their trips short and headed north, clogging roads and toll stations.

Residents of the region have fresh memories of the magnitude-8.8 quake and resulting tsunami on Feb. 27, 2010, that killed at least 521 people and left 200,000 homeless.

Sergio Barrientos, director of the seismology office at the University of Chile, said Sunday's temblor was itself an aftershock of last year's mega-quake.



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, second right, convenes the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011.

Mexican cartel announces 1-month truce

MORELIA, Mexico (AP)—A letter purportedly signed by La Familia drug cartel announcing a one-month truce circulated Sunday in the western state of Michoacan.

In the one-page message, distributed by e-mail and in some cities door by door, the gang claims it will halt all crime activity during January to demonstrate that the cartel "is not responsible for the criminal acts federal authorities are reporting to the media."

Prosecutors have not verified the letter's authenticity, according to an employee of the Michoacan bureau of the federal Attorney General's Office who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

The government says La Familia has been weakened by a recent string of arrests and deaths of top leaders.

In another letter that circulated in November, La Familia

purportedly offered to disband.

Last month, gunmen torched vehicles across Michoacan and used them as barricades to block all entrances into the state capital of Morelia after federal police killed alleged La Familia leader Nazario Moreno Gonzalez.

La Familia has occasionally made public pronouncements seeking to convince the public that it is defending Michoacan against other drug gangs.

Federal officials, however, say the cartel has terrorized the state with kidnappings, extortion, hundreds of murders, decapitations and drug trafficking.

More than 30,000 people have died in drug-related violence nationwide since President Felipe Calderon launched a crackdown on cartels after taking office in December 2006, first deploying hundreds of soldiers and federal police to his home state of Michoacan.

On Sunday, Calderon said in

a New Year's broadcast that his administration will continue to fight organized crime.

"We all know it is necessary to rid Mexico of crime, impunity and corruption, which had been rooted in our society and our institutions," he said. "I can assure you we are on the right path and we will defeat the criminals, to ultimately build a Mexico of peace."

Earlier Sunday, military and federal agencies responsible for fighting the drug war released a joint statement highlighting what they called "historic achievements."

In Calderon's first four years in government, more methamphetamine, automatic rifles and grenades were seized than in the previous eight years, the statement said.

It did not say how seizures for cocaine and marijuana, the main sources of income for Mexican drug cartels, compare to previous administrations.

WORLD BRIEFS

Probe of Egypt church bomb focuses on local group

ALEXANDRIA, Egypt (AP)—Egyptian police are focusing their investigation into the New Year's suicide bombing of a church on a group of Islamic hard-liners inspired by al-Qaida and based in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria where the attack killed 21 people, security officials said Sunday. The bombing touched off riots and protests by Egypt's Christian minority, who feel they are targeted and discriminated against and do not get adequate protection from authorities. There were signs of beefed up security outside churches nationwide and dozens returned to pray Sunday in the bombed, blood-spattered Saints Church—many of them sobbing, screaming in anger and slapping themselves in grief.

Visitors snap up 100 trillion Zimbabwe bank notes

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Western visitors to Zimbabwe are looking for zeros. They're snapping up old, defunct Zimbabwe bank notes, most notably the one hundred trillion Zimbabwe

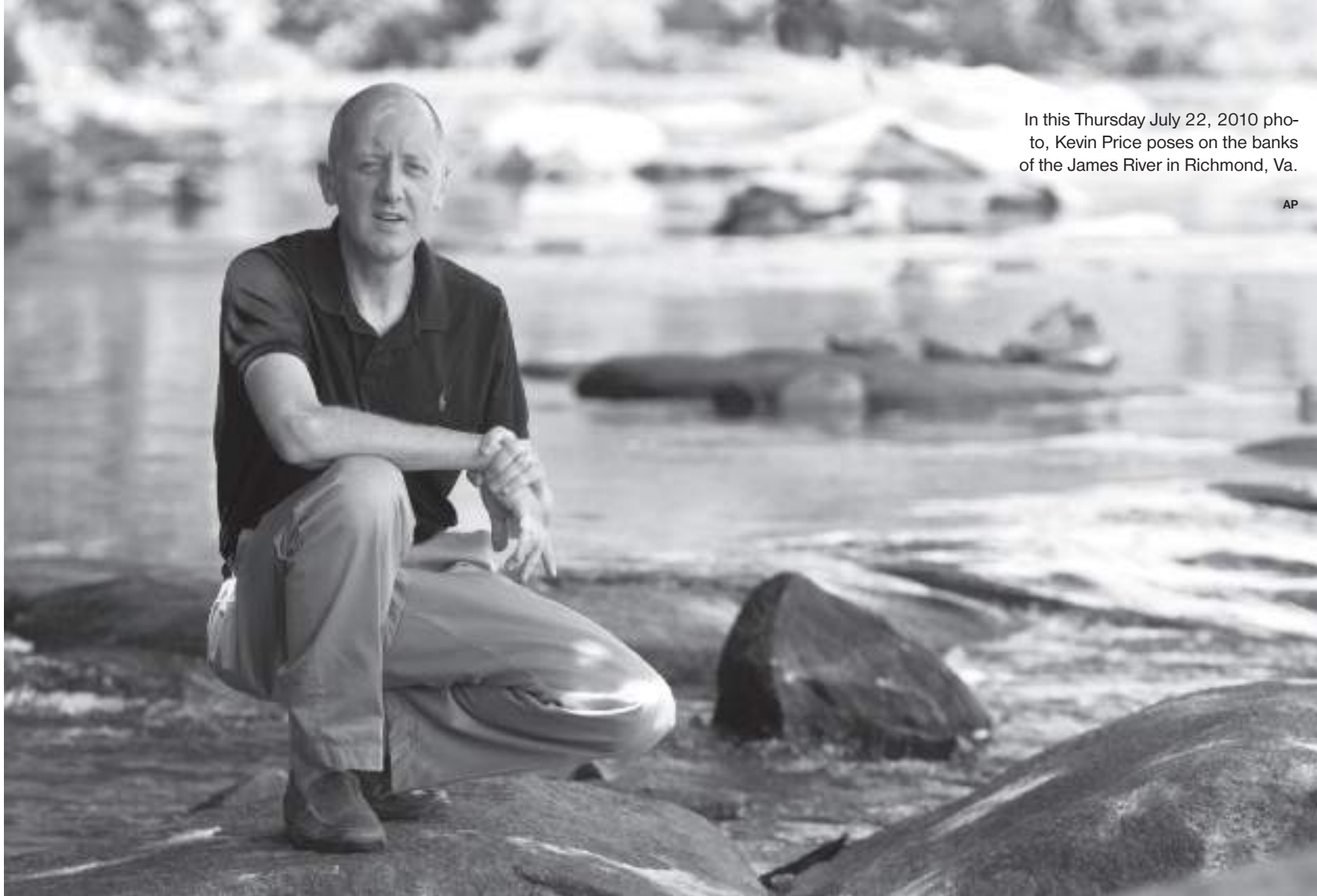
dollar bill, as an economic souvenir. The one hundred trillion Zimbabwe dollar bill, which at 100 followed by 12 zeros is the highest denomination, now sells for \$5, depending on its condition. That bill and others—among them millions, billions and trillions, were abandoned nearly two years ago, when the American dollar became legal tender in the hopes of killing off the record inflation that caused all those zeros.

UN peacekeepers come under threat in Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP)—Some people yell "U.N. out!" as the Jordanian U.N. peacekeepers pass by in their armored personnel carriers, but these soldiers don't understand French. One man honks his horn before dragging his thumb across his throat in a gesture that cannot be misunderstood. The United Nations declared Al-assane Ouattara the winner of Ivory Coast's long-delayed presidential vote, but incumbent leader Laurent Gbagbo has refused to step aside now for more than a month. Gbagbo accuses the U.N. of failing to remain neutral, and the U.N. has ignored his demand for thousands of peacekeepers leave.

Focus

Top Catholic educator



In this Thursday July 22, 2010 photo, Kevin Price poses on the banks of the James River in Richmond, Va.

AP

concealed abuse knowledge

By PATRICK CONDON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kevin Price was struggling with memories of the sexual abuse he says he suffered at the hands of a high school teacher, so he reached out to the religious order that runs the Catholic school he attended.

De La Salle Christian Brothers, which educates more than 1 million students around the world, apologized for Price's pain and sought to reassure him. The order's Midwest leader said the brother in question had been forbidden from contact with anyone under 18 and was working in a prison.

But in a 1995 letter obtained by The Associated Press, the leader neglected to mention something: The prison was for males from age 10 to 21. The writer of that letter, Brother Thomas Johnson, is now the second-ranking official in the worldwide order.

Brother Raimond Rose was counseling young inmates at a juvenile detention center in Minnesota. One of the inmates later filed a lawsuit accusing him of molestation. In fact, 21 men have filed lawsuits against Rose in cases dating back to the 1960s. Four of the suits were filed last month.

Price, of Richmond, Va., and the other accusers feel betrayed by the or-

der, which operates more than 1,000 schools and educational institutions in 82 countries, including about 75 high schools in the U.S.

It's unclear whether Christian Brothers knew the full scope of the accusations against Rose. But this much is certain: The order was well aware that Rose was not supposed to be working with children—which is more than Minnesota prison officials said they knew when they hired him a year before the letter was written.

Johnson "told me what I believed to be honest and truthful—that Brother Raimond had been addressed by the Christian Brothers," Price said. "It's really been a shock to me and has kind of shattered my faith."

Rose, who is now 77, has never been criminally charged, though law enforcement agencies in California, Minnesota and North Dakota have investigated various allegations against him.

Rose had worked at the prison about four years before officials there heard about sex-abuse allegations stemming from his years at Christian Brothers schools. When a prison official contacted Johnson, he pleaded ignorance.

"Until this accusation, I was unaware of any problem with Brother Raimond," Johnson wrote the state's deputy commissioner of corrections in a 1998 letter obtained by the AP—three years after his letter to Price. "Our files did not contain any reference to the fact

that he was not to work with minors."

Johnson is now the order's vicar general and is based at its headquarters in Rome. He did not respond to an e-mail from the AP. The man who succeeded him as the order's Midwest leader, Brother Francis Carr, said Johnson and other Christian Brothers could not be interviewed.

Several of Rose's accusers provided the AP with documents. Most were plaintiffs in a series of recently settled lawsuits against the Christian Brothers filed by Patrick Noaker, an attorney in the St. Paul law firm run by Jeff Anderson, one of the country's most active plaintiff's attorneys in clergy abuse cases.

Many of Rose's accusers say the order responded to sex-abuse allegations simply by shuffling him from job to job—at Catholic high schools in Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin and California.

In a written statement, Carr detailed what he called a "vigorous background check and screening process" now in place for anyone the order hires to work with children—including a requirement that "any brother MUST report known or suspected child abuse" to both superiors in the order and to civil authorities.

Another of Rose's accusers, John Purdy of St. Paul, said the order has declined to give him proof that the new policy is actually in place.

Carr declined to provide contact information for Rose himself, who now

lives at what Carr called an "adult health facility" in Pennsylvania.

Rose "will not have any contact with minors," Carr wrote.

The Christian Brothers in 2004 paid \$1.1 million to a former student at De La Salle High School in Concord, Calif., where Rose taught in the early 1980s.

The student was among several at the school who alleged molestation by Rose. The \$1.1 million was part of a \$6.3 million settlement that also involved allegations against two other former teachers.

Most of the plaintiffs interviewed by the AP declined to discuss their settlements, though Paul Mehl of Fargo, N.D., said he got \$50,000 from the Christian Brothers. Several said they were disappointed the settlement didn't include a strong statement of responsibility from leaders of the order.

Tim Caroline, who claims Rose molested him at a Christian Brothers retreat center north of St. Paul in the early 1970s, now directs his anger less at Rose—"He's just a sick old man now"—than at the order.

"They were negligent, completely negligent," says Caroline, now superintendent of public schools in Moose Lake, Minn.

The AP generally does not identify victims of alleged sexual abuse, but Caroline and other men interviewed allowed their names to be used.

A Louisiana native, Rose became a

brother in 1963. Brothers make vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience and live in religious communities, but they are not ordained as priests and do not preside over Mass or administer other sacraments.

Rose went on to teach religion and history classes at De La Salle High School in Minneapolis; Pacelli High School in Stevens Point, Wis.; Cretin High School in St. Paul, Minn.; Shanley High School in Fargo, N.D.; and the De La Salle High in California. He also worked at Dunrovin Retreat Center in Marine on St. Croix, Minn. Each of those postings later prompted at least one lawsuit claiming sexual abuse.

Many of the accusations followed a similar pattern: Rose allegedly took a boy or groups of boys on school trips, gave them alcohol and then molested one or two after everyone had fallen asleep or passed out.

"You know, you get to that age, you haven't even kissed your first girl yet. And here you've got this guy kissing you," said Purdy, whose lawsuit contends Rose molested him in 1966. "He did some harm."

In the 1970s, Rose worked for four years at Fargo's Shanley High School, where lawsuits allege he molested Price, Mehl and four other students. Mehl, the 48-year-old owner of a natural foods business in Fargo, said that not long after Rose molested him on a class trip, he was summoned to the office of a school official who asked him if anything happened.

"I told him every last detail—the molestation, everything," Mehl said. "I never, ever heard anything about it again." He said the official he talked to has since died.

A year after Rose left Shanley, he was teaching at the California high school. In 1983, two detectives interviewed Rose, students and school administrators after a counselor reported his suspicions that Rose gave a student alcohol and molested him.

Investigator Paul Arno wrote that Rose "had pedophilic traits that required attention, but there was insufficient evidence to support a conviction for a felony molest charge." Rose "should not be allowed to come in contact with minors, especially in his employment, if the sexual allegations were true," he wrote.

Rose was never charged. He left Concord, Calif., in 1983, and his various placements in the ensuing decade did not result in any new allegations.

Johnson, in his 1995 letter to Price, wrote that Rose had been treated for alcohol abuse and received "intensive counseling in the area of sexuality."

Price had initiated the correspondence with Johnson as part of an attempt to address unresolved childhood issues that he believed contributed to a failed marriage and departure from a promising job.

A few weeks before writing Johnson, Price located Rose and met him at a restaurant in Minneapolis, where he said Rose confessed and apologized. Rose also promised Price that he no longer worked with children—a claim that Johnson echoed weeks later in his letter.

In fact, Rose at that time was chaplain for the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Red Wing, a prison for male inmates ages 10 to 21. The prison fired Rose days after learning of previous abuse allegations against him.

Overdrive

NUTS & BOLTS

Base Price: \$26,245

As tested: \$31,780 (with comfort package, power sunroof, navigation and 9-speaker sound system)

2011 Regal a new beginning for Buick



The 2011 Buick Regal CXL now is German-engineered, a top-notch performer and is a Buick like no other. MCT

By BARRY SPYKER
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

OK, I can admit it now. As a young man I once had a thing for the Buick Regal. It was back in the 1970s, I was twenty-something and so, of course, I never admitted this out loud.

The Regal, then in its second generation, had the waterfall grille and single square headlamps, and something about it attracted me. And it actually did offer a turbocharged V-6, a rather firm suspension and sporty wheels. Still, young men generally did not yearn for the Buick Regal.

Upshift 32 years: The 2011 Buick Regal CXL now is German-engineered, a top-notch performer and a midsize sedan that satisfies all my ancient cravings and will more than satisfy the sport driver in everyone.

This is a Buick like no other. No sur-

prise, perhaps, since it is virtually the same car as the Opel Insignia, which has pulled in at least 30 awards. It was last year's European Car of the Year and, by the way, it is also the top-selling midsize sedan in Europe.

Not a bad resume. China, too, is in love with the Regal, having bought more than 100,000 of them. They love it for the same reason you will: its sweeping, aggressive design combined with the heart of a lion when it comes to performance.

Regal gets the same waterfall grille, too, along with chrome trim and superb, clean gaps on the outside panels. It stands with bold headlamps and tail lamps, and has a sleek profile atop standard 18-inch wheels.

Maneuvering the Regal down a twisty road is just plain fun. Steering is precise and its well-tuned suspension, with MacPherson struts up front and a multilink system in back, offers great confidence on the bends and corners. I felt I could push it much more.

An adaptive suspension system, which Buick calls its Interactive Drive Control, changes the dynamics of the car based on how you drive. So it adapts to your acceleration, braking steering and cornering habits.

You can also choose among three settings—normal, tour and sport—to set up the system for cruising or sport driving. Leave it in normal and it'll make the adjustments for you.

Gear changes take place with a smooth six-speed automatic, but a manual is available. Whoa ... a manual tranny in a Buick? Yes, by golly, this is a first for Buick since the 1989 Skylark.

Speaking of firsts, the Regal this year offers a turbocharged engine for the first time in a Buick since 1987. Happen to remember the GNX?

Initially, Regal's power was supplied by a 2.4-liter Ecotec 4-cylinder engine—same one as in the LaCrosse—which gets 182 horsepower. But more exciting is the recently

unveiled 2.0-liter 4-cylinder turbo, which teams up 220 horses and packs 258-pound-feet of torque. It has plenty of kick for passing on the highway and, uh, fun times, too.

It is only available with the six-speed automatic at the moment, but a six-speed manual is due out any day.

Mileage figures come in the high teens around town, and the high 20s on the highway.

Each of those miles are going to be comfortable with standard leather seats, bolstered to keep you snug. Legroom and headroom are adequate and visibility all around is decent.

Backseat room falls short of, say, the Honda Accord, but it's far from worst in the midsize segment. After all, there is 97 cubic feet of space in the cabin. A 14 cubic-foot trunk is fine for the usual stuff: groceries and golf clubs.

Borrowing from the LaCrosse and Enclave, interior materials are nice to the touch and the eye. Trims are satin metallic, piano black or Kibo-

patterned, featuring a dark wood that is globally popular.

A controller on the center console operates the audio, navigation system and Bluetooth phone. Blue lights bring a soft, elegant look to the instrument panel.

Backing out of the driveway is made safer and easier with an optional camera offering views on the nav screen. Among other safety options are a blind-spot monitor and rear-seat air bags.

Stability and traction control are standard with the Interactive Drive system on 2.0-liter turbo models.

Times must be changing. The Regal, a Buick, is a German-engineered sedan that feels at home with its pricier German neighbors on the Autobahn. And, as sure as Dr. Hook made the cover of the Rolling Stone magazine, the Regal earlier this year made it to the cover of Motor Trend.

Finally, it is safe to admit: I like the Buick Regal. And I have some company in China.

Tire purchase for a first-time buyer

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I'm almost ready to buy my first set of new tires and haven't a clue what to look for. I'd like to learn how to make a good buying decision rather than have someone just sell me what they want to sell me. The car is a 2006 Toyota Corolla LE, a graduation gift from my parents. I'd like to show off my new tires at Christmas and look like I made a wise choice, along with a good deal.

ANSWER: I'd recommend you take a tour through Tirerack.com to build an understanding of tire terms and types and to compare brands, models, quality ratings, warranties, customer reviews and

prices. This will take less than an hour, and you'll enjoy the hunt. I like the site's easy-to-use tools to learn about tires and make informed comparisons.

Your original equipment tires were All-Season 195/65R-15 Bridgestone Insignias, a ho-hum tire. Looking at this tire's customer reviews and uniform tire quality grade rating, or UTQG rating, you could do better making your own choice this time.

The UTQG number is the manufacturer's rating for tread life. The higher the number, the better. It's best used to compare tires within a tiremaker's family of tires. The two letters that follow relate to wet-surface traction and resistance to heat. An A is better than a B, and so on.

In addition to your original tire being available, I found more than 80 additional candidates for your car. A neat shopping tool to make sense of this myriad of choices is the Tirerack.com's Tire Decision Guide, found under the "Shopping Tools" tab on the site's navigation bar. You'll identify your vehicle, indicate if occasional snow usage is likely, and rate your three personal priorities: tread life, vehicle handling and ride/noise comfort. You can then deselect any brands you don't want and proceed to the prioritized results. You'll find the huge list has narrowed considerably.

Passenger all-season tires prioritize a soft, quiet ride and long wear over vehicle handling. Grand touring all-season

tires lean towards better handling, and high-performance all-season tires tip further yet towards great handling, but are likely to be noisier, ride firmer and not last as long. I omitted the ultra high performance group, since it is a Corolla. You can then sort the finalists by price, brand, or other criteria.

I won't suggest which tire to buy, as you may have your own brand or tread style preferences. Michelins are magnificent, but pricy. Sumitomo and Kumho do a good job for a budget price, and there are many great brands in between, including Bridgestone.

Same goes for where you actually purchase the tires. Tire Rack can ship purchased tires to a local participating installer, or you could buy your tires

directly from a local business, armed with some solid comparison information as you come in the door.

I typically omit the offered road hazard warranty, which costs \$8 to \$12 per tire. I also pass on the fee to fill the tires with nitrogen, since air is free and consists of 78 percent nitrogen anyway.

Regardless of the brand and model you select, you can feel good about the decision, as you were in charge of the criteria.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him e-mail at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

Slavery paintings coming down from Atlanta office

ATLANTA (AP)—Murals of slaves harvesting sugar cane on a Georgia plantation and picking and ginning cotton are coming off the walls of a state building on the order of a new agriculture commissioner.

The murals are part of a collection of eight works painted by George Beattie in 1956 depicting an idealized version of Georgia farming, from the corn grown by prehistoric American Indians to a 20th-century veterinary lab. In the Deep South, the history in between includes the forced use of slave labor.

"I don't like those pictures," said Republican Gary Black, the newly elected agriculture commissioner. "There are a lot of other people who don't like them."

Slavery was indisputably part of 19th-century farming in Georgia. By 1840, more than 280,000 slaves were living in the state, many as field hands. Just before the Civil War, slaves made up about 40 percent of the state's population.

Beattie's murals tell part of the story. In one painting, two well-dressed white gentlemen in top hats and dress coats leisurely inspect processed cotton. They're framed on either side by black slaves doing the backbreaking work of cotton farming.

On the left, a slave hunches over to pick cotton bolls by hand. Two other slaves are using the infamous Whitney gin—invented near Savannah—to

separate cotton fiber from seeds as a white overseer weighs cotton bags behind them.

"I think we can depict a better picture of agriculture," Black said.

There are no signs of the whippings, beatings, shackles or brutality used to subjugate the slaves, who appear healthy, muscular, even robust.

Black said less controversial murals, a scene at a state farmers market, for example, may find a new home in a conference room or elsewhere in the building.

Few have openly protested the murals, maybe because the agriculture department is not heavily visited. Black's election marks a generational shift. He will succeed Democrat Tommy Irvin, who was appointed to the post by a segregationist governor in 1969 and won re-election ever since.

Black's plans after the inauguration next month include painting rooms, cleaning offices, patching walls—and taking down those murals.

A full century after the Civil War, Southerners still argue over how to handle potent symbols of slavery and segregation in public places. It's nothing new. The same year Beattie finished the



One of seven historic paintings hang in the lobby of the Georgia Department of Agriculture Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in Atlanta.

murals, state lawmakers put the Confederate battle flag back into Georgia's state flag to protest integration. Only in 2001 did Gov. Roy Barnes replace it, and some say it cost him the election the following year.

Those conflicts spill into art. In 2007, a black lawmaker lashed out at white colleagues for refusing to support putting a portrait of Coretta Scott King in the Statehouse beside that of her husband, slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. The sponsor suggest-

ed her white colleagues were bigoted. The opposing lawmakers argued that portraits in the capitol should be reserved for Georgia legislators.

In 1995, two years before he died, Beattie defended his murals in a department-sponsored article that mentioned the art had spurred debate and concern among visitors and employees. "As a human being, I am vehemently opposed to slavery, as anyone should be," Beattie said, "but it was a significant epoch in our history;

it would have been inaccurate not to include this period."

His paintings showing slavery could be interpreted as an indictment. They hang in a lower lobby opposite a painting of colonial founder James Oglethorpe, a utopian who dreamed of making Georgia a classless society free of slavery.

One of Beattie's friends, the sculptor George Beasley, said Black should commission new artwork if he has a new vision, not remove the originals.

Beasley, a professor emer-

tus at Georgia State University, admits that Beattie stretched reality to build his scenes. His friend was an optimist with an artistic tendency to gloss over life's roughness.

"It kind of reflects George Beattie's personality," Beasley said. "He always looked on the bright side of life ... He liked to portray the history and the beauty of things. I would have rather had seen the scene maybe not so sunny, and muddy, and maybe the slaves under more duress, as they would have been."

Donor in 1st successful transplant dies in Maine

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Ronald Lee Herrick, who donated a kidney to his dying twin brother 56 years ago in what's recognized as the world's first successful organ transplant, has died of complications following heart surgery. He was 79.

Herrick died Monday at the Augusta Rehabilitation Center in Augusta, said his wife, Cynthia. He had been in deteriorating health since his October surgery, she said.

Herrick gave a kidney to his twin brother, Richard, at what is now Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. The 5 1/2-hour operation on Dec. 23, 1954, kept Herrick's brother alive for eight years and was the first successful organ transplant, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing. Lead surgeon Dr. Joseph Murray went on to win a Nobel Prize.

The operation proved that transplants were possible and

led to thousands of other successful kidney transplants and ultimately the transplant of other organs. Doctors had tried a handful of transplants worldwide without success up to that point, said Murray, who went on to perform another 18 transplants between identical twins.

"This operation rejuvenated the whole field of transplantation," Murray, 91, told The Associated Press in a phone interview from his home in Wellesley, Mass. "There were other people studying transplants in four or five different countries, but the fact that it worked so well with the identical twins was a tremendous stimulus."

Herrick was raised on a family farm in Rutland, Mass., where he graduated high school. He later served in the U.S. Army.

At 23, Herrick was glad to give up a kidney if it would help

his brother, who was dying from chronic nephritis, an inflammation of the kidneys. Murray thought the odds of a transplanted organ being accepted would be enhanced since they were identical twins.

Before the operation, many people opposed the idea of transplanting a body organ, equating it with desecration of a body. Others felt it was unethical to operate on healthy humans, and respected editors of medical journals wrote that it was contrary to the Hippocratic Oath's vow to never do harm to anyone, Murray said.

But Herrick never wavered and the operation went on as planned with no complications. Richard Herrick met his future wife, Clare, in the recovery room, where she was a nursing supervisor.

"He was the only one in the world who could save his brother's life, so he was going to do

it," said Cynthia Herrick. "There was no question about it."

Ronald and Cynthia married in 1959, and they moved to Maine in 1968. He taught math for 37 years, in both Massachusetts and Maine. He also raised cows and cut hay for decades on a small farm he bought in Mount Vernon.

In 1997, he and his wife sold their farm and moved to a house in Belgrade.

Herrick rarely mentioned the operation to people he knew, but he was known in the medical world for his pioneering role.

He and Murray marked the 50th anniversary of the operation at the National Kidney Foundation's 2004 U.S. Transplant Games in Minnesota, said foundation spokeswoman Ellie Schlam. Herrick and Murray together lit the flame to kick off the games, an Olympic-style event for athletes who have received organ transplants.



In this June 4, 1955 file photo, Richard Herrick, left, and his twin brother Ronald, from Northborough, Mass., sing at the annual meeting of the Mended Hearts Club at a hotel in Boston.

"He was a humble man. You got the sense he didn't think he'd done anything extraordinary, but that he had done what

a brother would do," Schlam said. "He wasn't too impressed with himself, but he was impressive."



Zsa Zsa Gabor to have part of leg amputated

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Zsa Zsa Gabor was hospitalized Sunday to undergo surgery to have part of her right leg amputated because gangrene was setting in, a representative said.

Doctors examined a lesion on Gabor's leg that had gone from just over an inch to about a foot and was growing gangrenous, publicist John Blanchette said.

^{AP}
In a June 8, 1990 file photo Zsa Zsa Gabor smiles at a charity auction in Beverly Hills, Calif. A representative for Gabor said Sunday Jan. 2, 2011 that she is back in a Los Angeles hospital to have part of her leg amputated.

"They're going to have to amputate part of her leg," Blanchette said. "They said if they didn't, she could lose her life." He said the amputation would likely be below the knee.

She was taken to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and had been prepared for surgery Sunday night, Blanchette said. Her husband Prince Frederic von Anhalt was with her.

The 93-year-old former actress broke her hip and had replacement surgery in July, and has been hospitalized several times since for swelling in her legs and blood clots throughout her body. She was in critical

condition and asked for a priest to read her last rites during a hospital visit in August, but recovered and returned home.

Gabor has used a wheelchair since she was partially paralyzed in a 2002 car accident, and had a stroke in 2005.

Gabor retreated from the spotlight after the accident and a stroke. She liked staying home and watching soap operas, game shows and old movies, von Anhalt told reporters in July 2010. She detested having her picture taken by the paparazzi while she was in her wheelchair.

"She wants people to remember her as she was years ago,"

he said.

A Hungarian-born sex symbol of the 1950s and 1960s, Gabor had a brief and unremarkable film career, appearing in films ranging from "Moulin Rouge" in 1952 to "Queen of Outer Space" in 1958, and had no regular television role like her sister Eva had on "Green Acres."

Her primary role was herself—appearing on TV specials and game shows, as a guest on several television series, and in real-life dramas like her slapping of a Beverly Hills policeman in 1989 that led to a brief jail term.

'Fockers' finishes first with \$26.3M weekend

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Robert De Niro and Ben Stiller's "Little Fockers" remained the top draw at the weekend box office with \$26.3 million, according to stu-

dio estimates Sunday.

It was closely followed by Jeff Bridges and Matt Damon's Western "True Grit," which was No. 2 for the second-straight weekend with \$24.5 million.

"Little Fockers," released by Universal, raised its domestic haul to \$103.2 million. Paramount's "True Grit" lifted its total to \$86.8 million, becoming the top-grossing film ever from directors Joel and Ethan Coen, whose previous best was \$74.3 million for "No Country for Old Men."

With no new wide releases out over New Year's weekend, the Hollywood top-10 lined up largely the same as it did over the Christmas holiday.

Bridges also had the No. 3 film with Disney's sci-fi sequel "Tron: Legacy" at \$18.3 million, while Dan Aykroyd's family flick "Yogi Bear," from Warner Bros., was fourth with \$13 million.

After a sluggish fall and holiday season, Hollywood is off to a slow start in 2011. Overall revenues came in at \$158 million, down 28 percent from New Year's weekend a year ago, according to box-office tracker Hollywood.com.

The holiday season in 2009 was unusually strong, largely because of James Cameron's "Avatar," which was on its way to becoming the biggest modern blockbuster with \$2.8 billion worldwide.

A year ago, "Sherlock Holmes" and "Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel" also held up well over New Year's weekend.

"What made the difference last year was just that incredible combination of films," said Paul Dergarabedian, Hollywood.com box-office analyst. "That said, I think 2011 is going to be a huge year. If you look at the titles, I think we're going to get our



^{AP}
In this film publicity image released by Universal Pictures, Robert De Niro, left, and Ben Stiller are shown in a scene from "Little Fockers."

box-office strength back."

The final "Harry Potter" film is among Hollywood's offerings this year, along with the latest in the "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Transformers," "Twilight," "Cars," "Kung Fu Panda," "X-Men" and "The Hangover" franchises.

"Little Fockers" has done good business despite bad reviews for the third installment in De Niro and Stiller's "Meet the Parents" franchise.

"I'm sorry the business isn't better for the industry overall, but having said that, it doesn't make a difference for us. We were the No. 1 film for the holidays," said Nikki Rocco, head of distribution for Universal. "Considering it's the third time around, not so bad."

"True Grit" is a rare hit Western - once a Hollywood staple but a genre that has all but vanished. Industry insiders had been skeptical about the film's prospects, especially since the 1969 version of "True Grit" was one of John Wayne's best-known roles from late in his career, earning him the best-actor Academy Award.

But the Coens never considered their version a remake. They did a faithful adaptation of Charles Portis' novel, the source for both movies, and the Coens' version has earned terrific reviews.

"They acted like there'd never been another movie made, that this was the first. You've got to give them credit. It's a stunning achievement," said Don Harris, executive vice president of distribution at Paramount.

While this season's top hits failed to measure up to "Avatar" and other 2009 holiday blockbusters, smaller Oscar contenders continued to score in the top-10.

Paramount's boxing drama "The Fighter," with Mark Wahlberg and Christian Bale, was No. 7 with \$10 million, raising its total to \$46.4 million; Fox Searchlight's psychosexual thriller "Black Swan," starring Natalie Portman, came in at No. 9 with \$8.5 million, raising its haul to \$47.4 million; and the Weinstein Co. historical drama "The King's Speech," with Colin Firth, was No. 10 with \$7.7 million, pushing its sum to \$22.8 million.

'Hot in Cleveland' star Valerie Bertinelli marries

MALIBU, Calif. (AP)—Actress Valerie Bertinelli has tied the knot in Malibu.

Publicist Heidi Schaeffer told The Associated Press that the 50-year-old "Hot in Cleveland" star married financial planner Tom Vitale Saturday.

Schaeffer said in an email that a report by People Magazine of

the wedding was accurate.

The ceremony took place in front of about 100 people at her home, according to People.

Guests included Bertinelli's ex-husband—rocker Eddie Van Halen—and their son Wolfgang. Bertinelli and Van Halen split in 2000 and were officially divorced in 2007.

Bertinelli stars in the TV Land sitcom "Hot in Cleveland" and serves as a TV spokeswoman for the Jenny Craig weight loss system. She first found fame as star of the 1980s sitcom "One Day at a Time."

She and the 49-year-old Vitale had been dating for seven years and were engaged during an Italian vacation in March.

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Little Fockers

Friday & Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:40
 Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:20
 Mon through Thurs 4:20 7:20

Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller
 Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

A birthday party for the twins gives Greg an opportunity to redeem himself after he takes a job that raises the suspicions of his overbearing father-in-law, Jack (Robert De Niro), in this installment of the hit comedy series. Greg (Ben Stiller) and Pam (Teri Polo) have been together for ten years, and now they're the proud parents of two adorable twins. But money is tight, and in order to keep his family afloat, devoted nurse Greg takes a second job working for a drug company.



True Grit

Friday & Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:35
 Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:25
 Mon through Thurs 4:25 7:25

Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon
 Western • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

A 14-year-old girl joins an aging U.S. marshal (Jeff Bridges) and another lawman (Matt Damon) in tracking her father's killer into hostile Indian territory in Joel and Ethan Coen's adaptation of Charles Portis' original novel. Sticking more closely to the source material than the 1969 feature adaptation starring Western icon John Wayne, the Coens' True Grit tells the story from the young girl's perspective, and re-teams the celebrated filmmaking duo with their No Country for Old Men screenwriting partner Scott Rudin. Josh Brolin co-stars.



Yogi Bear

Friday & Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
 Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
 Mon through Thurs 4:00 7:00

Justin Timberlake, Dan Aykroyd
 Children's, Family • Rated PG

Synopsis

Hanna-Barbera's beloved picnic basket-stealing bear makes his big-screen debut in this live-action/animated mix children's pic from Ash Brannon, co-director of Surf's Up. The Tooth Fairy writing team of Joshua Sternin and Jeffrey Ventimilia provide the screenplay, which will center around CG Yogi and Boo Boo as they interact with live actors in Jellystone Park.



Tron: Legacy

Friday & Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:45
 Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
 Mon through Thurs 4:05 7:05

Garrett Hedlund, Jeff Bridges
 Science, Fiction • Rated PG



Fighter

Friday & Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:30 9:55
 Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:30
 Mon through Thurs 4:30 7:30

Mark Wahlberg, Christian Bale
 Drama • Rated R



How Do You Know?

Friday & Saturday 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:50
 Sunday 1:10 4:10 7:10
 Mon through Thurs 4:10 7:10

Reese Witherspoon, Owen Wilson
 Comedy • Rated PG 13



The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader

Friday & Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
 Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:15
 Mon through Thurs 4:15 7:15

Georgie Henley, Ben Barnes
 Fantasy, Children's, Family • Rated PG

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Ice-T welcomes Hungary probe into explicit songs

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP)—Hungary's media authority says it is investigating a radio station for playing Ice-T songs with explicit lyrics, an announcement that got an enthusiastic response from the hip-hop star and actor.

The songs "Warning" and "It's On" played in September of last year should have been broadcast only after 9 p.m., the National Media and Infocommunications Authority said in a statement posted on its Web site Saturday.

Tilos Radio argued that since the lyrics are in English and the station has very few young listeners, the songs did not have an "adverse affect on the moral development" of children under 16.

Ice-T, known for his controversial "Cop Killer" track and as a star of "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," welcomed the dispute, posting "I love it! The world still fears me. hahaha!" on Twitter.

The announcement comes as Hungary is under scrutiny for a contentious new media law that sparked an international outcry over press freedom, though Hungarian authorities said their investigation is based on a 1996 law regulating radio and television.



AP

In this file photo, Ice-T arrives for the Special Screening of Tyler Perry's 'Why Did I Get Married Too?', Monday, March 22, 2010 in New York.

The new law, which took effect Saturday, greatly expands the state's power to monitor and penalize private news outlets on broadly defined grounds. Media watchdogs and several European countries, including heavyweight Germany, have criticized it.

Since winning a two-thirds parliamentary majority in April elections, Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Fidesz party has modified the Constitution several times to fit its political aims and taken numerous measures—including limiting the powers of the country's top court and naming party loyalists to key watchdog positions for extraordinarily long terms.

All three of Hungary's opposition parties said they would ask the Constitutional Court to review the media law.



In this Oct. 22, 2010 file photo, Lindsay Lohan arrives for a probation violation hearing at Beverly Hills Courthouse in Beverly Hills, Calif.

AP

After rehab release, more uncertainty for Lohan

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lindsay Lohan is scheduled to be released from the Betty Ford rehab center in Palm Springs sometime Monday, only to face an uncertain career and looming legal issues.

For months, the actress has been haunted by her inability, or unwillingness, to shake a 3 1/2 year old drunken driving case that resulted in two rehab

stints and two trips to jail in 2010 alone.

And now she also remains under investigation for alleged misdemeanor battery on a Betty Ford worker and needs to satisfy a criminal judge that she's been in compliance with her probation terms during her three-month stint at the Ford center.

Still, experts say Lohan has a good shot at recovery. Provided,

of course, that she wants it, changes her party girl lifestyle and remains in continued therapy.

If a New Year's Day message posted on her Twitter account is any indication, the "Mean Girls" star seems ready to do just that. "Today is the first day of the rest of my life," it said. "The future depends on what we do in the present."—Mahatma Gandhi... One step at a time..."

Swedish actor Per Oscarsson feared killed in fire

STOCKHOLM (AP)—A house fire appears to have killed actor Per Oscarsson, a giant of Swedish cinema who won a best actor award at Cannes in 1966 and appeared in films based on Stieg Larsson's "Millennium" trilogy, and his wife, police said Sunday.

The remains of one person were found Sunday in the ashes of the house and are probably those of the 83-year-old actor or his wife, 67-year-old Kia Ostling, said police spokesman Jan Strommegard. Both were reported missing by their relatives who say the couple apparently was home when the fire destroyed the house early Friday.

The building, located in a remote area outside the small town of Skara in southwest Sweden, had burned to the ground. Only the chimney was left when fire-



AP

Swedish actor Per Oscarsson seen in this Jan. 5, 2000 file picture during a recording of the TV series Mr. Von Hancken.

fighters arrived at the scene.

Strommegard couldn't immediately say when the identification of the remains would be completed but said police

would continue to search for the remains of a second person.

The cause of the blaze was unknown.

Oscarsson won the best actor award at the 1966 Cannes Film Festival for his role as starving writer Pontus in the movie "Hunger." During his career he starred in more than 100 Swedish films and TV series.

Most recently, he appeared in the Swedish film "The Girl Who Played With Fire" based on Larsson's popular book. He played Holger Palmgren, the legal guardian to the heroine, Lisbeth Salander.

In his review of the film, U.S. critic Roger Ebert singled out Oscarsson's performance and described him as "a great Swedish actor... who incredibly never worked with Bergman."

Agent: Chuck Berry suffered from exhaustion

CHICAGO (AP)—An agent for Chuck Berry says exhaustion was the reason the rock-and-roll legend felt ill before a Chicago show and had to have medics check him out.

Agent Dick Alen said Sunday via e-mail that the 84-year-old Berry was on a plane going home

to the St. Louis-area. He says he didn't know if Berry was seeking additional medical treatment.

Fire Department spokesman Joe Roccasalva says Berry felt better and signed a release after being checked out before Saturday's show. Concertgoer Steve Handwerker says Berry gave an

erratic, out-of-tune performance and had to be helped offstage.

Handwerker says Berry thanked the crowd before leaving the stage.

Berry is known for classic songs including "Maybelline," "Johnny B. Goode," and "Roll Over Beethoven."

In-laws' bad attitude tests limits of woman's tolerance

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: How does one live peacefully and get along with one's in-laws? I understand that everyone has different ideas, morals, etc., and I feel we should all try to respect one another's differences. However, my in-laws make it extremely difficult to spend time with them.

How does one eat at the same table with people who eat with their faces an inch from their plates and chew with their mouths open? How does one tolerate their complaining about everything and everyone? How does one coexist with people who think they're perfect and the rest of the world is flawed?

I thought about giving them an etiquette book as a gift, but my spouse told me not to waste the money.

BITING MY TONGUE IN ST. PAUL, MINN.



Dear Abby

DEAR BITING: An etiquette book would help only people who recognize they needed to consult one. The way to deal with your in-laws is, first, to remember they did one thing right: They produced your husband.

Because their table manners offend you, visit with them after mealtime whenever possible. If you can't avoid it, keep your eyes on your own plate. When they complain, respond with something positive or tactfully redirect the conversation to another subject. When they present themselves as perfect, never disagree—and see them as infrequently as possible.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend of two years, "Bobby," is still technically married to—and living with—his wife and child. He says he "has" to stay there because his son has learning difficulties and needs his support.

Bobby wants to wait until his son is older and more stable. His wife is a shrew who is just there as a roommate. She knows all about our affair, but she wants to stay married. She says she still loves Bobby even though he no longer loves her.

This triangle is stressful for me and Bobby. Don't you think his wife should wake up and smell the coffee? Bobby and I want to get on with our life together without all of this baggage constantly interfering with your plans. What should we do?

HIS TRUE LOVE

DEAR TRUE LOVE: The person who should be smelling the coffee isn't Bobby's wife—it's you. You have invested two years of your life in a man who is as married as one can get. Bobby isn't going anywhere, and the sooner you accept that fact the sooner you can find an eligible man to spend your life with. This may seem hard to accept, but if you don't believe me, just give your "true love" an ultimatum.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Does a woman consider a man's invitation to lunch as the next thing to his asking her to sleep with him? And what do others think about this invitation if the female mentions it to her husband or friends?

One etiquette book said, in effect, "If the lunch is not about business, it's about sex." Pretty severe, I think.

I asked a female co-worker to lunch for purely social reasons, but I have gotten reactions of derision from others about it. Can't a man ask a female to lunch without some sort of negative social reaction?

LET'S DO LUNCH, MISSOULA, MONT.

DEAR LET'S DO LUNCH: In my book he can. And many do. To ask someone to lunch in the bright sunlight of high noon in a casual restaurant is hardly what I'd call a proposition. And I've never seen an etiquette book that implied that it is. It appears the "others" you have been telling have dirty minds and enjoy razzing you.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Seahawks beat Rams; take NFC West



SEATTLE (AP)—Backup quarterback Charlie Whitehurst threw a 4-yard touchdown pass on Seattle's first drive, and Olindo Mare kicked second-half field goals as the Seahawks became division champions with a 16-6 win over the St. Louis Rams on Sunday.

The Seahawks finished as champs of the National Football Conference West at 7-9, the first playoff team with a losing record—not including the 1982 strike-shortened season—since the merger in 1970. It was Seattle's first division title since 2007.

St. Louis (7-9) was kept out of the end zone for the second time this season and rookie Sam Bradford couldn't complete the Rams' turnaround from winning just one game a year ago. Bradford finished 19 of 36 for 155 yards, and threw a costly interception midway through the fourth quarter.

Now the question for Seattle is who will be the quarterback for its first home playoff game since a January 2008 win over Washington.

Starter Matt Hasselbeck was active for Sunday night and went through pregame warmups, but Carroll held to his word the Seahawks were preparing for Whitehurst to be their guy after Hasselbeck injured his hip last week at Tampa Bay.

Whitehurst didn't fail in the second start of his career. He wasn't spectacular, but he avoided any critical mistakes: no interceptions, no dumb throws, no miscues a team like Seattle couldn't afford.

He finished 22 of 36 for 192 yards and his lone touchdown, a 4-yard toss to Mike Williams in the first quarter. Mare connected from 31, 38 and 34 yards in the second half and Seattle spent the final minute with Carroll screaming into the air and players slapping hands with fans in the end zone.

"I'm so proud of him. This was a big deal, big stage for him," Carroll said. "So proud of Matt for trying to get back tonight. It was great we didn't have to play him. Charlie had his chance, stepped up and did it."

Colts 23, Titans 20

At Indianapolis, Peyton Manning threw two touchdown passes and Adam Vinatieri made a 43-yard field goal as time expired, giving the Colts their seventh American Football Conference South title in eight years.

The Colts (10-6) tied Dallas' NFL record for most consecutive playoff appearances (nine) and will face the New York Jets next weekend in a wild-card game.

Texans 34, Jaguars 17

At Houston, Arian Foster ran for 180 yards to capture the NFL rushing title for Houston. The Jaguars (8-8) needed a win and a Colts loss to make playoffs, but couldn't overcome the absence of its top two offensive players. Quarterback David Garrard had finger surgery Thursday and Pro Bowl running back Maurice Jones-Drew sat out with a right knee injury.

Indianapolis wound up winning minutes after the Jaguars' game ended.

Falcons 31, Panthers 10

At Atlanta, Matt Ryan and Atlanta put a decisive stamp on the NFC South title and home-field advantage in the playoffs.

The Falcons (13-3) earned their first division title since 2004, home-field



Seattle Seahawks' Mike Williams, right, reaches in to pick up a pass from quarterback Charlie Whitehurst in the second half of an NFL football game against the St. Louis Rams, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011, in Seattle.

Favre says it is end of the line

DETROIT (AP)—Brett Favre was the NFL's ultimate iron man for 19 years, inspiring coaches and teammates with unparalleled toughness and thrilling fans with a daredevil's verve and a showman's sense of the moment.

Yet the once-irrepressible Favre never looked older or more fragile than in year No. 20. The magic of last season, and most of his brilliant career, never seemed farther away.

It had to end some time. And Favre says that time is now.

The 41-year-old quarterback sat out Minnesota's season-ending loss to the Lions on Sunday with a concussion, and it appears that perhaps the toughest man to ever play in the NFL had his career end not on the field trying to rally the Vikings to another victory, but on the bench as a third-string rookie floundered in Favre's place.

No one—not even Brett Favre—can play forever.

"I know it's time, and that's OK. It is," Favre said after the 20-13 defeat. "Again, I hold no regrets, and I can't think of too many players offhand that

can walk away and say that. Individually and from a team standpoint, it was way more than I ever dreamed of."

He also retired in 2008 with the Packers and 2009 with the Jets, only to return to the field both times when the football bug bit him in the summer. He knows that there will be doubters again.

"I don't know for me if it's ever easy," Favre said. "I'm sure throughout this year, the comment has been made that, 'We'll wait and see in August or September' and that's fine. It's time. I'm OK with it."

If this indeed is the end - for real, this time—for Favre, one of the most colorful and celebrated careers in league history concluded with a season filled with interceptions, injuries and insults.

He was picked off 19 times this season and his 69.9 quarterback rating is the lowest of his career. The Vikings sunk to the bottom of the NFC North after starting the season with Super Bowl aspirations, coach Brad Childress was fired during the season and Favre was fined \$50,000 for failure to

cooperate with an NFL investigation into allegations that he sent lewd photos and messages to a game-day hostess when both worked for the New York Jets in 2008.

Favre's reputation took a serious hit from the humiliating scandal, which tarnished the image of one of the league's most popular players. He declined to comment on the fine after the game.

His long-awaited union with receiver Randy Moss also was a spectacular failure and his cherished streak of 297 straight starts ended three weeks ago, with a sprained throwing shoulder making it impossible for Favre to let those famously zip-filled passes rip from his right arm.

And just for good measure, the Metrodome roof caved in to provide a perfect metaphor for Favre and the Vikings' 2010, forcing the Vikings to play "home" games at Detroit and at the University of Minnesota's outdoor stadium in December.

"It's been a wonderful experience for me," Favre said. "This year did not work out the way we would have hoped, but that's football. I don't regret coming back. I enjoyed my experience here."

gers' 1-yard touchdown pass to tight end Donald Lee gave Green Bay the lead, and its defense held on to clinch a wild card berth.

The Packers will visit the NFC East champion Eagles next Sunday.

Buccaneers 23, Saints 13

At New Orleans, Josh Freeman passed for two touchdowns but Tampa Bay failed to make the playoffs.

The Bucs (10-6) entered the game needing a victory and losses by both the Giants and Packers to make the post season. The Giants and Packers both won. The Saints (11-5) will open the playoffs next Saturday against the NFC West champion Seahawks.

Patriots 38, Dolphins 7

At Foxborough, Massachusetts, Tom Brady threw two touchdown passes

to cap a record-setting season as New England won its eighth straight.

The game meant nothing in the standings. Still, Brady played into the third quarter and finished with 36 touchdowns passing and four interceptions. He extended his NFL records to 335 straight passes without an interception and 28 consecutive regular-season wins as a starter at home.

Jets 38, Bills 7

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Mark Brunell threw two touchdown passes in relief of Mark Sanchez and Joe McKnight ran for a career-high 158 yards as the Jets' defense dominated.

Having already clinched a postseason spot, New York (11-5) sat a handful of stars, including LaDainian Tomlinson and Darrelle Revis, but still earned the fourth 11-win season in franchise history—and first since the 1998 team went to the AFC championship game. The Jets open the playoffs against the Indianapolis Colts next Saturday.

Lions 20, Vikings 13

At Detroit, Brett Favre stood in street clothes on the sideline in what likely was the final game of his 20-season career, watching the Lions (6-10) beat his Vikings for their fourth straight win.

The Vikings (6-10) closed out a lost season by putting the three-time MVP quarterback on the inactive because of a concussion, with rookie Joe Webb making his second start. After the game, Favre said it was time for him to call it a career.

Cowboys 14, Eagles 13

At Philadelphia, Stephen McGee threw a 4-yard touchdown pass to Jason Witten with 55 seconds left to lead Dallas over the NFC East champs.

Michael Vick and nearly every starter didn't play in a game that had no effect on Philadelphia's playoff positioning. The Eagles (10-6) are locked into the No. 3 seed and will host Green Bay in a wild-card game next Sunday.

Giants 17, Redskins 14

At Landover, Maryland, the Giants got the win, but they didn't get the help they needed to make the playoffs.

Osi Menzies forced two of the defense's four turnovers, and the Giants ended with a 10-6 and no playoff spot after the Packers defeated the Bears to clinch the final NFC postseason spot.

49ers 38, Cardinals 7

At San Francisco, Alex Smith threw a 59-yard touchdown pass to Vernon Davis in what likely was the quarterback's final hurrah with the 49ers in a matchup for last place in the awful NFC West.

Smith, the 2005 No. 1 overall draft pick who becomes a free agent, threw for 276 yards and two TDs overall and the Niners (6-10) made interim coach Jim Tomsula a winner in what will probably be his only game coaching the team.

Chargers 33, Broncos 28

At Denver, rookie Ryan Mathews ran for three scores and Nate Kaeding kicked four field goals for San Diego.

The Broncos (4-12) closed out the season with more than 11 losses for the first time in club history, but secured the No. 2 overall pick in the April draft behind Carolina.

edge throughout the NFC playoffs and a bye next weekend. The time off for Ryan and other starters came early, as backups took over in the fourth quarter.

Steelers 41, Browns 9

At Cleveland, Ben Roethlisberger threw two touchdown passes as Pittsburgh won the AFC North to secure a first-round playoff bye.

The game could be the final one for Browns coach Eric Mangini.

Roethlisberger, who got to rest most of the second half, threw a 56-yard TD to Mike Wallace on his first pass.

Ravens 13, Bengals 7

At Baltimore, Ed Reed had two interceptions and Ray Lewis recovered two fumbles, part of an opportunistic defense that carried Baltimore.

Despite the victory, the Ravens

(12-4) failed to get the help necessary to win the AFC North. Baltimore needed Pittsburgh to lose to Cleveland, but the Steelers won easily to deny the Ravens a first-round bye.

Raiders 31, Chiefs 10

At Kansas City, Missouri, Michael Bush rushed for 137 yards and a touchdown as short-handed Oakland beat playoff-bound Kansas City to gain a unique NFL distinction.

The Raiders (8-8) finished 6-0 in the AFC West, the first team since the 1970 merger to go unbeaten in the division and not make the playoffs. The AFC West champion Chiefs (10-6) were 2-4 in the division, and will host the Ravens in the playoffs next Sunday.

Packers 10, Bears 3

At Green Bay, Wisconsin, Aaron Rod-



Boston Celtics' Paul Pierce drives past Toronto Raptors' Linas Kleiza during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Toronto on Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011.

Police: Orioles' Simon is main suspect in killing



SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic

(AP)—Baltimore Orioles reliever Alfredo Simon is the main suspect in a fatal shooting New Year's Eve in the Dominican Republic, police said Sunday.

The pitcher is suspected of killing 25-year-old Michel Castillo Almonte and wounding his 17-year-old brother during a celebration in the northeast coastal town of Luperon, police said in a statement. No motive was disclosed. Simon is from the Dominican Republic, and police said he fled after the violence.

Felipe Alou Jr., a Dominican representative for the Orioles, said he spoke with Simon on Saturday and the player said he was in the area when the violence occurred but insisted he was not involved in the shootings.

"He says to us that the wounded man can confirm that he was not the one who fired," Alou told The Associated Press.

The injured teenager was shot in the right arm and remains hospitalized in the Dominican city of Santiago.

Simon hired a Dominican lawyer, Alou said, but did not give the name.

Police Maj. Pablo Cuevas said he believes Simon is hiding in Santiago, where he was born. He is confident the player will surrender to authorities by Monday. Simon could face up to 30 years in prison if found guilty.

The 29-year-old pitcher joined Baltimore in 2008 but was quickly sidelined with an injury. He went 4-2 with a 4.93 ERA last season. He had 17 saves before Orioles manager Buck Showalter decided to make Koji Uehara the closer.



AP

In this Sept. 26, 2010 file photo, Baltimore Orioles pitcher Alfredo Simon, right, walks off the field after being ejected from the game by home plate umpire Bill Welke after striking Toronto Blue Jays batter Jose Bautista, background left, with a ball during fifth-inning baseball game action in Toronto.

Pierce scores 30 as Celtics beat Raptors



TORONTO (AP)—Paul Pierce scored 30 points, Ray Allen had 23 and the Boston Celtics beat the Toronto Raptors 93-79 on Sunday night.

Glenn Davis added 15 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists as Boston won for the 10th time in 11 meetings with Toronto.

Pierce was disappointed with himself after scoring just 12 points and making a season-high six turnovers in Friday's 83-81 loss to New Orleans. He made up for that by hitting 10 of 15 shots, seven of eight free throws and grabbing seven rebounds to help Boston snap a two-game losing streak.

DeMar DeRozan scored 27 points, Joey Dorsey had 13 points and 13 rebounds, and Amir Johnson had 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, who have lost 11 of their past 14.

Toronto trailed by nine points to start the fourth but cut it 80-75 on a reverse layup by DeRozan and a jumper from Jose Calderon with 5:05 left. The Raptors missed a chance to draw even closer when Dorsey missed two free throws.

Pierce made the Raptors pay by answering with a driving dunk, Allen made a 3-pointer and followed with a jumper in the lane as Boston pushed its lead to 87-75, its biggest of the game at that point.

Boston point guard Rajon Rondo returned to the starting lineup after missing seven games because of a sprained left ankle. He had four points and eight assists in 34 minutes.

Rondo, who came in averaging an NBA-best 13.2 assists, had to be helped off the court in the fourth quarter of a victory over the New York Knicks on Dec. 15, and had not played since.

Celtics forward Kevin Garnett, who injured his right calf in Wednesday's loss to Detroit, missed his second straight game.

The short-handed Raptors were without center and leading scorer Andrea Bargnani, who missed his fourth straight game with a sore left calf. Guard Jerryd Bayless, who left Friday's loss at Houston with a sprained left ankle, did not play, and guard Son-

Source: Butler could have torn knee tendon

DALLAS (AP)—Caron Butler could be out at least a couple of months because of a knee injury, a tough blow for the already ailing Dallas Mavericks.

A person with direct knowledge said the initial diagnosis is a torn patellar tendon. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team was awaiting MRI results before making any announcements.

Butler went down during a loss at Milwaukee on Saturday night. He was coming off a season-high, 30-point performance the previous game

while picking up the offensive slack because of an injury to leading scorer Dirk Nowitzki.

Dallas coach Rick Carlisle had no new information about the injury before Sunday's game at Cleveland. Carlisle said Butler was flying from Milwaukee to Dallas Sunday evening. Carlisle wasn't sure when the MRI will take place.

"Anyone who speculates beyond that should be very careful in what they do because it could have ramifications," Carlisle said.

Nowitzki, who has a sprained knee,

New York's last seven points, and Danilo Gallinari had 19 to lead New York over Indiana.

Danny Granger had 25 points and 17 rebounds, and Darren Collison had 22 points, six assists and five rebounds for the Pacers, who lost for the fourth time in their last five games.

Mavericks 104, Cavaliers 95

At Cleveland, Shawn Marion scored 22 points and DeShawn Stevenson added 21 to help Dallas end a three-game losing streak.

The Mavericks, playing without starting forwards Dirk Nowitzki and Caron Butler, used a balanced attack. Jason Terry scored 18 points, Tyson Chandler added 14 points and 14 rebounds, and Jason Kidd had 10 points and eight assists.

Antawn Jamison led Cleveland with a season-high 35 points, and Ramon Sessions added 19.

Grizzlies 104, Lakers 85

At Los Angeles, Rudy Gay scored 27 points, and Zach Randolph added 21 points and eight rebounds as Memphis pulled away in the second half.

O.J. Mayo scored 15 points for the Grizzlies, who bounced back from two losses to wrap up their three-game road trip with a stunningly easy blowout of the two-time defending champions.

Kobe Bryant scored 28 points for the

ny Weems missed his seventh straight game because of back spasms.

DeRozan, who scored a career-high 37 points Friday, had 10 in the opening quarter but Pierce scored 8 as Boston led by one, 24-23, after 12 minutes.

Pierce added 12 more in the second as the Celtics maintained their narrow advantage, taking a 43-42 lead into the half.

DeRozan scored 10 points in the third, including a huge alley-oop from Jose Calderon, but Glenn Davis had nine as the Celtics took a 71-62 lead into the final quarter.

Hawks 107, Clippers 98

At Los Angeles, Joe Johnson scored 11 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter and Josh Smith added 22 as Atlanta rallied for the win over the Los Angeles Clippers.

Johnson, who returned to the lineup on Dec. 17 after missing nine games following right elbow surgery, was 7 for 20 from the field after going 18 of 51 over his previous three games.

Clippers rookie Blake Griffin scored 19 of his 31 points in the first half and pulled down 15 rebounds for his 27th double-double and 21st in a row. Baron Davis had 15 points and five assists.

Knicks 98, Pacers 92

At New York, Amare Stoudemire scored 26 points, including six of

MISO varsity girls volleyball season begins Jan. 13



ROSELYN B. MONROY
Amber Roberts plays for Saipan International School, which will compete in the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization's Varsity Girls Spring Volleyball League this month.

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



The Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization's Varsity Girls Spring Volleyball League will kick off on Jan. 13 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. Tinian High School, Saipan International School, Saipan Southern High School, Kagman High School, and Grace Christian Academy will be

fielding one team each in the competition, while Marianas High School has two squads. Schools still interested in joining the league have until Jan. 11 to sign up. Private schools must submit second quarter grades, while public schools are required to turn in first quarter grades. A maximum of 12 players is allowed per each team. All teams must have uniforms with numbers on the back. The home teams will get a choice whether to serve or receive at the game start during the regular season. The

first two games of the best-of-three series will be played to 25 points with a cap of 30. Teams will always play the third game, however the game point will be set at 15 with no cap. All Saipan teams will play in a round robin regular season to determine the seeding in the playoffs. Tinian will get the automatic third seed in the playoffs, which will start on Feb. 18. The playoff round will have a double-elimination format. For more information, contact Nick Gross at nickgross07@gmail.com.

MINOR
From Page 28

Curtis-McDonald. Besides the girls U16 singles, Minor is also entered in the U18 doubles and singles competitions. The CNMI junior netter is in Group 2 of the round-robin U18 singles and will have her first game today against Alana Dargham. Minor's second match in the pool is against Eliza Benzon. The Top 2 players in each division will advance to the crossover semifinals and the remaining two will battle for the championship. Group 1 has Curtis-McDonald's, Jupp, Chloe McKenzie and Minor's Pacific Oceania

teammate, Amanda Korinihona of the Solomon Islands. Minor will be teaming up with Korinihona in the girls U18 doubles and they will aim for the championship against Curtis-McDonald's and her yet to be determined partner. Minor's victory in the 2011 Goulburn Valley Junior Championships allowed her to surpass her performance in the same tournament last year. When the Shepparton event was still known as the Ducats GV Championships, Minor dropped her opening game and was relegated to the consolation draw. The tournament in Shepparton this year is only the first of the three events

that Minor will be competing in while in the Land Down Under. From Victoria, she and the rest of the Pacific Oceania Touring Team will go to Albury, New South Wales for the 2011 Australia Post Margaret Court Cup. The Albury tournament will be played from Jan. 8 to 11 at the Albury Tennis Association. Then from Albury, Minor and company will return to Victoria for the 2011 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships, which will run from Jan. 13 to 16, in Wodonga. After the three tournaments, Minor will head back to Melbourne and watch a couple of games in the 2011 Australian Open at the Rod Laver Arena.

SAIPAN
From Page 28

divisions will be played in the opening day at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield. The Majors division start up is still to be determined. The Ol'Aces topped last year's Majors

league, beating the Falcons in the finals, 8-2. The Patriots are the defending champions in the Junior League, having beaten the Ol'Aces in last season's finale, 10-0. In the Big League, the Falcons won last season against the Fielders, 3-2, while in the Senior League, the Fielders also lost in the finals to the Lions, 5-7.

Meanwhile, SLLB is planning to hold a membership meeting next week. SLLB will also have the final coaches and umpires meeting before the start of the season. Details about the upcoming meetings will be announced as soon as the dates have been confirmed.

ROSTERS
From Page 28

Joining the explosive duo are returnees Ed Diaz, Junior Renguul, Peter Camacho, Romeo Iginoef, Tyrone Omar, Trevor Ogumoro, Jose Tumaquip, and Ben Lisua, and newcomers Joe Lifofoi and Clayton Kenty. Elias Rangamar will be the Ol'Aces' coach. The Hoopaholics, who fell short of making it to the Final Four last season, are back with a talent-laden lineup led by the returning Jawn Joyner. Joyner will be teaming up with former Mobil player Kelvin Fitial, gunners John and Dave Sablan and James Villacrusis, swingman Ponce Rasa and his brother, Ionis, big men Derrick Tudela and Mel Manibusan, former CNMI Nationals mainstay Gus Palacios, Walter Mendez, and Chuck Deleon Guerrero. Jerry Diaz and Marlon Cabrera are the coach and assistant coach, respectively. The Fundamentalist will make its debut in the UBA men's league and will be bannered by soccer players from the

various clubs on the island. Leading the team is Kirk Schuler, the most experienced player in the group, as he had played in numerous basketball leagues last season. Completing the Fundamentalist roster are Twin Towers Dan Stafford and Ben Wood, Hokyun Lee, Minki Kim, Adam Walsh, Darren Keizer, Ben Petersburg, Eric Cooke, Daewon Jeon, Ray Babauta, and Blair Fox. Also debuting in the league are the Joe Diaz-coached Rollers. The young squad is composed of Jojo Ulloa, Manny Matagolai, Juan Ogarto, Ham Hambrose, Dom Reyes, Brandon Aulerio, John Laniyo, Paul Camacho, Don Teregeyo, Phil Norita, Tom Santos, and Frederick Litulimar. Satbahi, the third new team in the league, will have the core of Noni Saipan, which made it to the semifinals of the UBA caging last season. Anchoring Satbati is three-point shooter Wowie Abuel. Other members of the team are Bart Demapan, Glenn Aquino, Rolly Paraiso, Any Mortos, Mike Palacios, Conrad Sablan, Ba-

dong Camacho, Jun Pantaleon, Elgeanne Mangali, Kermit Concepcion, and player/coach Marlon Sison. IP&E Konflikt will also debut in the UBA caging and will have players who won the UFO caging. Coach Norman Del Rosario will be pinning his hopes on Elmer Esdrelon, Bernardo Aquino, Jomary Tumaquip, Brendon Talania, Mel Capalad, Bruce Berline, and Edsel Mendoza. Beefing up IP&E Konflikt's roster are new recruits Ivan De Vero, Kae Bernardo, Edwin Santos, Marlon De Dios, and Junar Guiab. NMC Proa and last year's pennant champion Mobil (formerly Advance X-Terminators) have yet to finalize their rosters, as two players—Gyles Ruluked and Gino Libuw—are both listed in their lineups. However, 10 players are already assured of suiting up for Mobil. The list includes prolific scorer Jun Estolas, Pando Muleta, Anthony Wenceslao, Ron Gamboa, Jorge De Guzman, Leo Factor, Larry Sharry, Gil Gapor, and Marvin Rabauliman. NMC also had 10 players locked

in on their roster—Pete Iguel, Dan and Aitao Barcinas, Jack Lizama, Peter Mendiola, Joe Villacrusis, Quincy Johnson, Mike Babauta, and Jesus Valdez. Majority of NMC Proa's players played for the CNMI Nationals in last year's Micronesian Games in Palau. Rufino Aguon and Ed Manalili are NMC Proa's coach and assistant, respectively. Mobil and NMC Proa have until Jan. 7 to make changes only on the two similar players listed in their roster. Meanwhile, the first game in the league's opening day will take place at 2:30 pm and will feature Prospects and the team to get the No. 2 slot in the draw. The opening ceremony will be held at 1pm. Games in the UBA caging will be played every Monday and Wednesday. There will also be matches every other Friday. Teams have until Jan. 14 to turn in the complete entrance fee. The league will strictly enforce the no complete payment, no play rule. Squads must also be in uniforms by their first match or risk forfeiture of the game.

RBC
From Page 28

to change depending on the turnout. Games will be played with two 16-minute halves. Team trophies will be awarded to the champions and runners-up of each division in addition to team sportsmanship honors. Individual awards will also be presented to the most valuable players both throughout the tournament and in the championship matches. "We just finished our first-ever Christmas Tournament for our

younger players and I would like to thank IT&E again for all of their support. The kids really had a good time and I was pleased overall with the execution of the event. Now we'd like to put on this next tournament for our older players. These kids are at that age, where they may make some questionable decisions in life. It is important for us, community members, to make efforts to keep them off the streets and out of trouble," RBC head coach Joe Diaz said. At present, games in the New Year caging will be played at the Garapan

Basketball Court, weather permitting. If necessary, matches will be moved indoor to the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Entrance fee per 12-man team is \$100, but with the help of sponsor, the fee could be decreased to only \$50 per squad. Cupid Fun Run RBC is also organizing a Cupid Fun Run fundraiser mid February to help raise money for its much-anticipated trip to Anaheim, California where they will compete in the 2012 Coca-Cola National Invitational Youth Basketball

Tournament. RBC was invited to participate in the stateside event by the Southern California A.C.E.S. Basketball Academy. The run will start at the Kilili Beach basketball court and continue north along the Beach Road pathway ending at Garapan Basketball Court. Once at the finish line, participants will get a chance to compete in a variety of side games for prizes, such as phones, gift certificates, and more. Entrance fee is \$10 per person. For more information, contact Diaz at 483-1791 or 322-3240.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	25	7	.781	—
New York	19	14	.576	6 1/2
Philadelphia	13	20	.394	12 1/2
Toronto	11	22	.333	14 1/2
New Jersey	9	25	.265	17
Southeast Division				
Miami	26	9	.743	—
Orlando	21	12	.636	4
Atlanta	22	14	.611	4 1/2
Charlotte	11	20	.355	13
Washington	8	24	.250	16 1/2
Central Division				
Chicago	22	10	.688	—
Indiana	14	18	.438	8
Milwaukee	13	18	.419	8 1/2
Detroit	11	22	.333	11 1/2
Cleveland	8	26	.235	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division				
San Antonio	29	4	.879	—
Dallas	25	8	.758	4
New Orleans	20	14	.588	9 1/2
Houston	16	17	.485	13
Memphis	15	19	.441	14 1/2
Northwest Division				
Utah	23	11	.676	—
Oklahoma City	23	12	.657	1/2
Denver	19	13	.594	3
Portland	18	16	.529	5
Minnesota	9	25	.265	14
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	23	11	.676	—
Phoenix	14	18	.438	8
Golden State	13	20	.394	9 1/2
L.A. Clippers	10	24	.294	13
Sacramento	7	24	.226	14 1/2

Yesterday's Games

New York 98, Indiana 92
Atlanta 107, L.A. Clippers 98
Boston 93, Toronto 79
Dallas 104, Cleveland 95
Portland 100, Houston 85
Sacramento 94, Phoenix 89
Memphis 104, L.A. Lakers 85

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-New England	14	2	0	.875	518	313
x-N.Y. Jets	11	5	0	.688	367	304
Miami	7	9	0	.438	273	333
Buffalo	4	12	0	.250	283	425
South						
y-Indianapolis	10	6	0	.625	435	388
Jacksonville	8	8	0	.500	353	419
Houston	6	10	0	.375	390	427
Tennessee	6	10	0	.375	356	339
North						
y-Pittsburgh	12	4	0	.750	375	232
x-Baltimore	12	4	0	.750	357	270
Cleveland	5	11	0	.313	271	332
Cincinnati	4	12	0	.250	322	395
West						
y-Kansas City	10	6	0	.625	366	326
San Diego	9	7	0	.563	441	322
Oakland	8	8	0	.500	410	371
Denver	4	12	0	.250	344	471

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East						
y-Philadelphia	10	6	0	.625	439	377
N.Y. Giants	10	6	0	.625	394	347
Dallas	6	10	0	.375	394	436
Washington	6	10	0	.375	302	377
South						
y-Atlanta	13	3	0	.813	414	288
x-New Orleans	11	5	0	.688	384	307
Tampa Bay	10	6	0	.625	341	318
Carolina	2	4	0	.125	196	408
North						
y-Chicago	11	5	0	.688	334	286
x-Green Bay	10	6	0	.625	388	240
Detroit	6	10	0	.375	362	369
Minnesota	6	10	0	.375	281	348
West						
y-Seattle	7	9	0	.438	310	407
St. Louis	7	9	0	.438	289	328
San Francisco	6	10	0	.375	305	346
Arizona	5	11	0	.313	289	434

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Oakland 31, Kansas City 10
Tampa Bay 23, New Orleans 13
New England 38, Miami 7
Detroit 20, Minnesota 13
Atlanta 31, Carolina 10
Pittsburgh 41, Cleveland 9
N.Y. Jets 38, Buffalo 7
Baltimore 13, Cincinnati 7
San Francisco 38, Arizona 7
San Diego 33, Denver 28
Green Bay 10, Chicago 3
Houston 34, Jacksonville 17
N.Y. Giants 17, Washington 14
Dallas 14, Philadelphia 13
Indianapolis 23, Tennessee 20
Seattle 16, St. Louis 6

2010 NMIFA Men's FA Cup Finals



Inter Godfather's Arkie Reusora, right, in action against an MP United defender.



Inter Godfather's Chris Nelson runs through the sideline as an MP United defender chases him.

MP United teammates exchange hi-fives after a 3-0 win over Inter Godfather's.



MP United and Inter Godfather's players pose with league officials at the conclusion of the 2010 NMIFA Men's FA Cup at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.



MP United's Tiger Lee dribbles out of Inter Godfather's defense.

MP United goalie Daniel Stafford leaps for a save.

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



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Pierce scores
30 as Celtics
beat Raptors

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Seahawks beat Rams;
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Minor wins first match in Australia

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior tennis player Thea Minor got off to a good start in the 2011 Goulburn Valley Junior Championships in Australia.

Minor won her opening game in the tournament being played at the Shepparton Lawn Tennis Club in Shepparton, Victoria after sweeping Melbourne's Simone Phillips, yesterday, 6-4, 6-4.

The victory moved the 15-year-old Minor to the Round of 16 where she will be paired against Melissa Esguerra. Minor's next foe is seeded second in the 32-player draw.

The top seeding in the girls U16 singles even was given to Victoria's Emily Ryan. Other seeded players were Melbourne's Jayde Viccars, Ozge Mehmet, Alana Parnaby, and Georgina Jupp and Shepparton's Laura Kelly and Hope

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Thea Minor, seen here playing in the PIC tournament last year, won her first game in Australia yesterday.

Rosters of 5 teams in UBA caging finalized

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The final rosters of five of the seven teams competing in the 2nd Docomo Pacific/UBA Men's League are now out with about two weeks before the annual caging kicks off at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Defending champion Prospect will have six players from last season's winning team returning this year. The list includes player/coach Perry Inos, Darwin Barbo, Derrick Aughenbaugh, Ernie Moises, Alex Lauron, and Errol Peredo. Completing the team are Joseph White, Keoni Chariton, Eli Aughenbaugh, Leo Apelo, Joy Dayrit, and Juan Camacho.



Prospects, which swept the Ol'Aces in the best-of-three title series last season, will play in the opening game on Jan. 17 with its foe to be determined via draw.

Last season's runner-up Ol'Aces lost a couple of play-



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Advance X-Terminators' Junar Guiab, right, looks for a teammate to pass the ball to, as he is hounded by Prospects' Alex Lauron during their game in last season's UBA caging at the Garapan Basketball Court.

ers from their 2010 roster, but added firepower to their lineup with the arrival of gunners Freddie Pelisamen and Tony Diaz.

Pelisamen played for Mobil last season, while Diaz missed the inaugural UBA caging.

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Angelo Salas, center, tries to move away from the defense of Savali Talalemotu, left, and Frank Mettao during a youth league at the Garapan Basketball Court, which will be the venue of Rollers Basketball Club's New Year U16 and U18 caging.

RBC to start New Year caging Jan. 21

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



The Rollers Basketball Club will be holding the 2011 U16 and U18 New Year Basket-

ball Tournament from Jan. 21 to 23.

Five teams have already confirmed to participate and slots are still available. The tournament will implement a single-round robin format, which is still subject

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Saipan Little League to follow ban on composite bats

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Saipan Little League Baseball will enforce the new rules

on bats in the upcoming season, banning composite ones in all divisions.

SLLB president Robert Guerrero confirmed the league has received word on the rule change and he said they are prepared to comply accordingly.

On Dec. 30, the Little League headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania announced that composite bats will no longer be used in the Majors division of the Little League World Series. The Junior, Senior and Big divisions had already banned the use of composite bats back in August 2010.

Little League officials announced the moratorium based on a research it commissioned from the University of Massachusetts in Lowell.

Composite bats have metal



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

An Ol'Aces batter waits for the pitch during their game against the Patriots in the Junior League division of the 2010 Saipan Little League Baseball at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

shells enclosing woven fibers inside the barrels. Critics claim that they can endanger youngsters because balls fly off the bats at high speeds and can injure players. However some

supporters say that the bats are lighter and easier to handle.

Players can still use wooden and metal bats or bats with composite materials in the handles only.

In other news, the 2010 season of the Saipan Little League Baseball will kick off on Jan. 23.

However, only games in the Junior, Senior, and Big League

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